

The Prace

tyfe of Prelates.

Compyled by the sayth-
full and Godly learned
man Wyllyam

Wyndale.

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And Wyllyam Seres. Dwelling

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When the old scribes and pharisees had darkened the scripture with their traditions, false interpretations & wicked peruations of his wylde wisdom, and shutt up the kingdome of heauen: it is Gods word that the people coulde not entre in, into the knowledge of the true waye, as Chryst complayneth in the Gospell. Math xxiii then they sate in the hartes of men, with their false doctryne in the steade of Gods word, and slewe the soules of the people, to deuour theyr bodies, and to rebuke the of theyr worldly substance. But when Chryst and John the baptyst had restored the scripture agayne vnto the true vnderstandinge, and had vttered their fallshood and improued their traditions, and confounded their false interpretations with the cleare and euident Textes, and with the power of the holy ghoost and had brought all their iugglinge and hipocrisie to lyght, then they gette the vnto the elders of the people, and persuaaded them, saying: this man is surely of the Deuill, and his myracles be of the Deuill no doubte. And these good works which he dothe in healyng the people, yea and his preaching against our couetousnes, are but a clog

to bringe him vnto his purpose, that
when he hath gotten hi Disciples ynough
he maye rise against the emperoure & make
him selfe Kinge, and then wth all the romay-
nes come and take our Lande from vs and
carve a waye oure people and put other na-
tions in oure realme, and so shall we lose al
that we haue, and the most parte of vs, our
lives thereto. Take heade therfore betimes
while there is remedye, yet he go so farre
ye be not able to resyst hym.

The elders of þe peple which were rich
and welthy, though befoze they in a maner
fauoured Christ, or at the lest way were in-
different not greatly caring whether God
or the deuyll reyned, so they might bide in
aucthoritie, feared immediatly (as Herode
did of the losse of his Kingdome when the
Myse manneared where the newe bozne
King of Jewes was) and conspired wth
the scribes and pharisees against Christ &
toke him and brought him vnto Pilate, say-
yng: We haue found this fellow peruer-
ting the people and forbiddinge to paye tribute
vnto Cesar, and saying that he is a Kinge &
mouing the people from Galylee vnto this
place: The Pilate (though he likewise was
befoze indifferent, but now in feare of þe los-

re of his office thorow such persualibz, fle
we innocent Chyste. And in very dede as
the scribis and phariseys were all their ly-
ues before bynde gyden vnto þ destruction
of their soules: eue so wer they at their last
ende blinde prophetes vnto þ destruction of
their bodis. For after that they had slayn
Christ & diuerse of his apostles, & persecuted
those poore wretches that beleued on hym
God, to aduenge the poore innocent bloud þ
bare witness vnto his truthe: poured his
wraath among the, that they þ felues rose
against þ Emperour. And þ Romans ca-
me accordinge as they blydlye propheted
and slewe the moste part of the and carped
the reste captiue into all nations: and put
other nations in the Realme. But whose
faule was that insurrectione against þ Empe-
rour, & mischance that folowed: Christes &
his apostles who they falsely accused befo-
re hāde: No, Chyste taught that they shuld
gyue Cesar that w perteyned vnto Cesar:
& god þ w beloged to God: Eue that they
shuld geue Cesar their lawfull bodis ser-
uice, & god the harte, & that they shuld loue
gods lawe, & repēt of theyr euill, & come &
receaue mercy, & let the wraath of God be
taken from the. And the apostles taught þ

all soules shuld obey the hyer powers: & t^e porall rulers: But their obstinate malice & so hardened their hartes y^t they coulde not sepe^rt, and their rayling vppon the open & manifest trueth which they coulde not improve, & resisting the holy gost, and slepyng of y^e preachers of rightuousnes, brought the wrath of God vpon them, & was cause of their destruction.

Euen so our scribes & phariseys / now we that their hipocrisie is disclosed, and theye falsched so brought to lyght that it can no l^eger be hyd, get them vnto the elders of the people, the lordes, gentylmen: and t^e porall officers, and to all that loue this world as they do, & vnto who seruer is greate wyth the king, & vnto the kinges grace him selfe, and after the same ensample and with y^e same perswasions, cast the into lyke feare of losing of their worldely dominions, & rore vnto them sayeng, ye be neglygent and care nothing at all, but haue a good spoyle that the heretikes rayle on vs. But geue them space a whyle tyl they be growne vnto a multitude, and then ye shall se them preach ag^ainst you, and moue the people ag^ainst you, & do there best to thrust you downe also, and shall cry havocke and make

ke all comen. **O** generation of serpents
how wel declare ye that ye be the right son-
nes of the father of all lies: for they which
ye call heretics, preache nothyng, saue that
which our sauoure Iesus Chyrist prea-
ched and hys Apostles, adding nought ther-
to, nor plucking ought therfro, as the scrip-
ture commaundeth, and teache all men re-
pentance to God and hys holpe saue, and
sayth vnto our sauour Iesus Chyrist, and
the Promyses of Mytpe made in hym
and obedyence vnto all that **GOD** coma-
maundeth to obey. Rather teach we so much
as to resyst your most cruell tyzanny with
bodelye violence, saue with Goddes worde
onely: intendinge nothyng but to dyspue you
out of the temple of Chyrist, the hartes con-
sciencs & soules of men (wherin with you
re false heade ye lye) ad to restore agayn Je-
sus our sauoure vnto hys possioun and
inheritaunce bought wth his bloude, wher-
e ye haue dyspued hym wth youre many-
fold wyles and subtyltyes.

Take hede therfore wicked prelates blind
de leaders of the blinde, inuocat. and obsti-
nate hypocrites take hede. For if the pharis-
tes for ther resysting the holy ghost that is
to saye, persecuting the open ad manifest
truth

death, and slaying the preachers thereof, de-
 nied not the wrath and vengeance of god:
 how shall ye escape, who are farre worse then
 the pharisees: for though the pharisees had
 shut by the Scripture & set up their owne
 professions, yet they kepte theiꝝ owne pro-
 fessions for the most parte. But ye will be
 the cheefest in Chyists flocke, and ye will not
 kepe one iote of the right way of his doctri-
 ne. We haue thereto sett vp wonderfull pro-
 fessions to be more holy thereby then ye thinke
 that. Chyistes doctrine is able to make
 you, and yet kepe as lytle thereof except it be
 with dispensations, in so much that if a man
 are you, what your meruelous fashioned
 playngcoates, and your other poppish
 meane, and what your disfigured Heades,
 and al your apparel play meane, ye know not,
 and yet are they but Sygnes of thynges
 whych ye haue professed. Chydely, ye will
 be papistes and holde of the Pope, and yet
 loke in the popes law, and ye kepe therof a
 moost nought at all, but wh it cometh for
 to make for your bellies and to main-
 tayne youre honour: whether in the scrip-
 ture or in your owne traditions or in the po-
 pes lawe that ye compell the saue people to
 obserue by violentie, thurteninge them with
 your

your excommunicatpons & curses that they
shal be dampned both body and soule, if they
keepe them not. And if that helpe you not,
then ye murder them merciesly wth the
sword of the temporall powres, whome ye
haue made so blynd, that they be ready to
slay whom ye commaunde, and wyl not yet
heare hys cause examined, nor geue hi rou
me to answer for hym selfe,

And pe elders of the people, feare ye god
also. For as þe elders of the Jewes, which
were partakers wth the scribes and ph
risees in resisting the holy goost, and in per
secuting the open truth, and sleing the wis
domes therof, and in provokynge the wrath
of God, had their part wth them also in þ
day of wrath and sharpe vengeance which
shortly after fell vpon them, as the nature
of the synne, agaynst the holy ghost is to
haue her dampnation, not onely in þ world
to come but also in this lyfe accordyng vnto
all the ensamples of the byble and aucten
tyke storyes sens the worlde began: uen þ
ke wyl ye, if ye wyl wincke in so open and
cleare light and let youre selues be led blynd
fold and haue your parte wth the ypocry
tes in lyke synne and myscheue: be sure, ye
shall haue your parte wth the them in lyke
wrath

byzath and vengeance that is lyke mozt hie
to fall vpon them.

And coerting þ the hypocrites put you
in feare of þ risig of your comens agairst
you. I answer: If ye feare your comens, to
sellis y^e a gainst your selues þ ye ste tiraūz
ses. For if your conscience accused y^e once
of euell doing, what neede ye to feare your
comens? What comens was euer so euell
that they rose agairst their headis for well
dopng? Moreover ye witness agairst your
se selues also that ye haue no trust in God.
For he hath promised þ temporall officers
assistance, if they minister their offices trues
ly, and to care for the keepinge of them, as
much as they care for to kepe his lawes.

The hypocrites happely byd you take
an ensample of the vplandish people of Als
many which they lve that Martin Luther
sturred vp. For first what one lieth in all
the wryting of Martin Luther bynd they
that teacheth a man to resist his superiours?
Moreover if Martin Luther and the prea
chers had sturred vp the comen People of
Germanye, howe happened it that Mar
ten Luther and other like preachers had
not perished lyke wise with them, whiche
IUCD longe after. Ye wyll aske

one who stirred them up then? I say you
 who stirred up the commones of the Jewes
 to resist the Emperour, after that the
 scribes and Pharisees with the elders of
 the people had slayne Christ and his
 apostles: Merely the wrath of God. And
 even so here the wrath of God stirred them
 up partely to destroye the enemyes and
 persecutours of the trueth, and partely to
 take vengeance on those carnall beastes
 which abused the Gospell of Christ to ma-
 ke a cloke of it to defende their fleshy libe-
 tie, and not to obey it and to save their soules
 thereby.

If kynges, Lordes, and great men
 therefore feare the losse of thys worlde: Let
 them feare God also. For in fearyng God,
 shall they prolonge their dayes vppon the
 earth, and not with fyghtyng against God.
 The earth is Goddes onely, and his fauour
 and mercy doth prolonge the dayes of kinges
 in their estate, and not their owne power
 and myght.

And let all men (be they neuer so greates)
 haue vnto this, and let this be an answer
 vnto them. Wicked kinge Achab sayde
 vnto the prophet Elias: Art thou he that
 troublest Israel? And Elias answered, I

Is not I that trouble Iſraell, but thou and
thy father's houſhold, in that ye haue foꝛ-
ſaken the commaundementes of the lord &
follow Idoles. Euen ſo the preachers of
the truth, which rebuke ſine, are not y^e trou-
blers of roialmes and comen welthes, but
they that do wickedly, and namely hygh pre-
lates and mighty princes which walke wth
out the feare of God and lyue abhominab-
ly corrupting the comen peo^ple wth their
Exa^mple. They be they that bzinge the
Wrath of God in all roialmes and trouble
all comen welthes, wth Matre, darthe
poer tie: priſon, ſuch turke and all myſe-
fortune.

And vnto all ſubiectes be ſcla^pde if
they oppreſſe the lawe of God and ſanct of
the lord Jeſus, & wyſe Chriſtes diſciplin
then let them rememb^r that there was ne-
uer man ſo greete a ſubiect as Chriſt was:
there was neuer Creature that ſuffered ſo
greete vntyghe, ſo patiently and ſo meekly
as he. Therfoꝛe what ſouer they haue be-
ne in times paſte let them note & thinke that
it is their partes to be ſubiecte in the ſame
kynde of ſubiection, and to ſuffer all thinges
patiently. If the hygh powers be cruell vnto
you wth naturall crueltie, then a myſe-
fortune

truelte and patience, ye shall eyther winne
the or mitigate their tpercences. If they ioy
ne them vnto the pope and persecut you for
yours faythe and hope, which ye haue in the
LORD Iesus: then call to mynde that ye be
cholen to suffer here wpth Chypste, that ye
maye ioye with him in the lyfe to com with
ioye euerlastig that shall infinitely passe this
yours shorte payne here. If they commaūde
de that God forbiddeth: forbide y God
cōmaundeth: then answere as the Apostles
dyd Actes. v. y God muste be obeyed more
then man, if they compell you to suffer vna
right: then Christ shall helpe you to beare, &
his spirite shall conforzte you. But onely see
that neyther they put you from Gods woꝝ
de nor yet relyst them with bodely violence.
But abyde paciently a whyle tyll the hypo
cresy of hypocrites be slayne with the swer
de of Gods woꝝde: and vntyll the woꝝde
be openlye Publyshyd and witnessed vnto
the Rulers of the world, that theyr blind
nesse may be without excuse.

And then will God awake as a fierce ly
on against those cruel wolues which deuou
re hys lambs, and will playe with the hy
pocrites, and compasse them in their owne
wyles, & send them a dasyng in the heade, &

in their bypocrisies, and destroye
them wth their owne counsell. And then
those malicious and wylfull blinde persecu-
ters, which refusing mercy when they were
recalled thereto, chole rather to haue theyr
parte wth hypocrites in sheadunge of inno-
cent bloude, shalbe partakers wth them
also in hauing their owne bloude shedde a-
gayne, God geuynge an occasyon that one
wicked shall destroy an other.

And as for wickednes whence it spring-
eth, and whos the cause of all insurreccy-
on, and of the faule of princes, and the shor-
tenyng of their dayes vpon the earth, thou
shalt se in the glasse folowynge, which I ha-
ue set before thine eyes, not to resyst the hy-
pocrites wth violence (which vengeance
perteyneth vnto God) but that thou mygh-
test se their wicked wayes and abhominas-
ble pathes, to wythdrawe thy selfe from
them and to come agayne to Chyrste and
walke in his lycht, and to followe his
steppes and to commyt the keepynge
both of thy body and soule also vnto
him and vnto the father thou
comest from, whose name be glori-
ous for euer.

Amen.

The Prye.

Prelates appointed to preache Christ,
maye not leaue Goddes moorde, and minis-
ter temporall offices, but oughte to
teach the lay people the ryght
waye, & let them alone with
all temporall busi-
nes.



Our saviour Iesus Christ
answered Pilate John. 18.
that his kingdom was not
of this world, And Math.
in the tenth he sayeth: The
disciple is not greater then his master. But
it ought to suffice the disciple that he be as
his master is. Wherefore if Christes king-
dome be not of this world, nor any of his
disciples maye be otherwise then he was,
then Christes vicars whiche minister his
kingdome here is his bodely absence, & ha-
ue the oversight of his flocke, may be none
Emperours, kinges, dukes, lordes, knyghts
temporall iudges, or any temporall officer
or vnder false names haue any suche domi-
nio, or minister any such office as requireth
vyolence.

And Mathew. vi. No man can serue

Of Prelates.

the masters, where Christ concludeth say-
ing. Ye can not serue God and Mammon
that is, riches, couetousnes, ambition and
temporal dignities.

And Mathe. xx. Christ called his dis-
ciples vnto him and sayde: ye knowe that the
lordes of the heathen people haue dominion
ouer them, and that they that be greate doo
exerce power ouer the: Howbeit it shall
not be so among you. But who soeuer will
be greate among you, shall be your minister,
and he that will be chiefe, shall be your Ser-
uant, even as the sonne of Man came, not
that men shoulde minister vnto hym, but for
to minstre and geue his lyfe for the redemp-
tion of manye. Wherefore the Officers in
Christys kyngdome maye haue no temporal
dominion, or Iurisdiction, nor execute anye
temporal auctoritie, or lawe of violence, nor
maye haue any like maner among the. But
cleane contrary they must caste them selues
downe vnder all, and become Seruants
vnto all, suffer of all, and beare the burthen
of euery mans infirmitie, and go before the
and fight for them, against the world with
the sword of Gods woorde, euen vnto the
death, after the ensample of Christ.

And Mathe. xxiii. When the dysciples
are

of Bidelate.

aced who shoulde be greates in the kingdome
of heauen; Chyrist called a yong chyld vnto
him: and set him in the middes among the,
sayeng: Excepte ye turne backe and become
as chyldre, ye shall not enter in the king
dome of heauen. Nowe yong chyldren be
are no rule one over an other, but all is fel
lowshyp among them. And he sayd more
ouer: Who seereth humblyth him selfe af
ter the ensample of this Chyldre, he is greas
t in the kingdome of heauen, that is, to be
(as concerning ambition and worldly des
yre) so chyld is, & I couldest not heve the
selfe about the byether is the very bearing
of rule and to be greates in Chyristes kingd
ome. And to describe the very bacion of the
greatenesse of his kingdome, he sayd: He
that receyveth one such chyld in my name
receaveth me. What is that to receave a
chyld in Chyristes name: Merely to submit
to nake and to humble the selfe and to cast
the selfe vnder all men and to consider all
mannes infirmities and weakenesses, to
helpe to heale their displeasures wth word
of trouth, and to lyue purely that they be no
contrarye ensample in the to what I orber
thou teachest them in Chyrist, that thou put
no stumbling blocke before them, to make
them

of prelates:

them falle whyle they be yet Younge and
weake in the fapth: But that thou abstayne
as Paule teacheth. i. Thessaloz. v. Ab omni
specie mala; from all that myght seme euill
oz whercof a man might surmyse anye, &
that thou so loue them; that whatsoeuer gif
te of god in the is; thou thynk the same, the-
irs and their fode and for their sakes geue
vnto the as the Truthe is; and that all the
infirmities be thynne, and that thou seale
them and that thynne hart moune for them
and that wyth all thy powre thou helpe to
amende them; and cease not to crye to God
for them neither daye noz nyghte: and that
thou let nothyng be founde in the; that any
man maye rebuke, but whatsoeuer thou tra-
chest them; thou that be: And that thou be
not a wolf in a Lambes skynne as our ho-
lye father the Pope is, whych cometh vnto
vs in Name of hypocryse and in the tytle
of curled Cham oz Ham calling hym selfe
Seruus seruorum; the seruante of all ser-
uantes; and is yet founde tyranus tyran-
nozom of all tyrautes moste cruell: Thys
is to receaue ponge chyldern in chrystes nas-
me; and to receaue ponge chyldern in Chrystes
name; is to beate ryle in þ kyngdō of chyst:
Thus ye maye se that Chrystes kyngdome

The Hierarchy

is altogether spirituall, and the bearyngs
of rule in it is cleane contrary vnto the bea-
ring of rule temporall. Wherfore none
that beareth rule in it maye haue any tem-
porall iurisdiction or ministrate any temporal
office that requyeth violence to compell
with all.

Peter was not greater then the other
Apostles, by any authoritie geuen
hym of Christ.

They saye that Peter was chefe
of the Apostles, verely as Apol-
les was called chefe of painters
for his excellent conning aboue o-
ther, even so Peter may be called chefe of
Apostles for his actiuitie and boldnes aboue
the other: but that Peter had any authori-
tie or rule ouer his bretheren & fellowap-
tles, is fals & contrary to the scriptur. Christ
forbad it the last euen before his passion, and
in dyuerse times before, and taught alwayes
the contrary, as I haue reherced.

Thou wilt saye thou canst not see how
there shuld be any good orde in a kingdom,
where none beare better then other, and
where the superiour hath not a lawe and au-
thoritie

Of Prelates.

thoritie to compell the inferiour with violence. The world truly can see none other way to rule, then with violence. For there no man absteyneth from euil but for feare, because the loue of ryghtuousnes is not wrytten in theyr hartes.

And therfore the Popes kingdome is of this worlde. For there one sorte are your Grace, your Holynesse, your fatherhod: An other, my lord bishop my Lord Abbot, my Lord Priour, An other master doctour, father, bachelor, master parson, master vicar, and at the last cometh in simple sir Johan. And euery man reyneth ouer other woth myght and haue euery ruler his pryson his iayler, his charynes, his tormentes, euen so much as pryers obseruauntes obserue that rule, and compell euery man eyther with violence about the cruelines of the heathen tyrants, so that what cometh ones in, maye neuer out for feare of telling tales out of scole. They rule ouer the bodye with violence and compell it whether the harte wyll or no, to obserue thinges of their owne making.

But in the kyngdom of God it is contrarye. For the spirit that bringeth the thether maketh the willing & geueth the luste vnto the lawe of God, & loue compelleth them to

W i s m o r t e

The practyse

woyke/and loue maketh euerie mans good
and all that he can do, commune vnto hys
neighbour's neade. And as every man is
stronge in that kingdome, so loue compelleth
him to take the weake by the hande/ and to
helpe him, and to take him, that can not go
vppon his shulders and beare him. And so
to do seruice vnto þe weaker, is to beare ru
le in that kyngdome.

And because Peter did exceede the other
apostles in servet service towarde his bre
thren, therfore is he called (not in the scrip
ture but in the vse of speaking) the cheefste
of the Apostles, and not that he had any do
minio over the. Of which truth thou may
est se all thy practise in the Actes of the A
postles after the resurrectio. For when Pe
ter had bene & preached in the house of Co
nelis an hethen mā, the other that were cir
cūcised, chode hym, because he had bene in
an vncircūcised mā's house and had eas
tē wth hi, for it was fozbydden in þe lawe, ney
ther wst they yet þe hethen shuld be called.
And Peter was fayne to geue accountes
vnto the (which is not tokē of superiozite)
And to shew the how he was warned of the
holy gost so to do Actes. xi.

And Actes the. xv. where a counsell was
gathered

of Prelates;

gathered of the apostles and discyples about
the circumcision of the heathen, Peter brought
forth not his commandment and the aucto-
rity of his vocation, but the miracle &
the holy ghost had shewed for the heathen
how at the preaching of the gospel, the holy
ghost had lighted vpon them and purged
their hartes through fayth, and therefore
said that they ought not to be circumcised.

And Paule & Barnabas brought forth
the miracles also that God had shewed by
them among the heathen, through preaching of
fayth. And the James brought forth a p-
rophecy of the olde testamēt for the same par-
tie: And therewith the aduersaries gave o-
uer their hold: and they concluded with one
assent by the auctoritie of the scripture & of
the holy ghost, that the heathen shuld not be cir-
cised, and not by the commandment of
Peter, under payne of cursing, excommu-
nication interdicting and lyke bogges to
make soles and chyldren afrayed with all.

And Actes. viij. Peter was sent of the
other apostles vnto the Samaritans, which
is an euident token that he had in iurisdic-
tion ouer them (for then they could not ha-
ue sent hym) But rather (as the truth is) the
congregation had auctoritie ouer hym

The Doctrin

and ouer all other papuare Parsons, to ad-
mitte them for ministers and send the forth
to preach whether so euer the spyte of god
moued them: and as they sawe occasion.

Galla.ij.

And in the Epistle vnto þe Gallathians
thou seist also howe Paule corrected Peter
when he walked not the ryght waye after
the truth of the Gospell. So now thou
seist that in the kingdome of Chyyst, and in
his church or congregation, and in his con-
7
Scripture selfe, the ruler is the scripture approued tho
is the cheif rowe the myracles of the holy gost and me
fest of the be seruaunts onely, and Chyyst is the head
apostles. and we all brethren: And when we call

men oure heades, þe we do not, because they
be shorne or shauen, or because of theyr na-
mes, parson, vicar, bisshoppe, pope: But ones-
ly because of the worde which they preach.
If they erre fro the worde: then may we
forer God moueth his harte, p[er]p[et]rator paul,
and correct hi. If he wyl not obeye the scrip-
ture then haue his brethren auctoritie by
the scripture to put hym downe & to sende
hi out of Chyestes church amonge the here-
sikes which preferre their false doctryne
þe true worde of Chyyst.

How

Of Bzelaes.

How the gospel punisheth trespassers
and how by the Gospel we ought to go to
lawe with oure aduersaryes.

Though þ they of Chyestes congrega-
cion be all wyl'ing: yet because þ
the moost part is always weak &
because also that the occasions of the world
be ever many and greate, in so muche that
Chyest, which wylle all thing befozehande,
sayth Mathe w. xviij. Woe be unto þ world
by reason of occasions of Euell, and saythe
also that it can not be auoyded but that oc-
caspons shall come, therfore it can not be
shosen but that many shal ouersaule, when
a weak Bzother hath trespassed, by what
law shal he be punished: verily by the lawe
of loue, whose properties thou readest in I.
xiii. of the first to the Corinthyans. If the
loue of God, which is my professiõ, be wryt-
ten in myne hart, it wyl not let me hate my
weak bzother when he hath offended me,
no more then naturall loue wyl let a Mo-
ther hate her chyld when it trespasseth a-
gainst her. Why weak bzother hath offended
me, he is fallẽ, his weaknes hath overcome
he: it is not ryght by the lawe of loue þ I
shuld now saule by þ hi, & treade hi downe.

The Practise

In þe myze and destroy him utterly: but it is
ryght by the law of loue, þat I runne to hym
& helpe him vp agayne. ¶ By what pryncesse
we shuld go to law wth our trespassers: chryst
teacheth vs Math. xviii. Tell hi hye fautes
betwene hi & the with all mekenesse, remē-
bryng þat thou arte a man & mayst fall also:
¶ If ye repēt, & thou loue hi, ye shall sone as-
gre: & the forgeue hi. And whē thou forges-
urst thy neyghbour, the thou arte sure that
god forgeueth the thy trespasses by his holy
promysse Math. vi. If he heare þat not, the
take a neyghbour or two. If he heare the
not, the tell the cōgregaciō wher thou art: &
let þe preacher pronouce gods law agāst hi
& let þe sad & discret mē rebuke hi & exhort
hi vnto repētāūce, if he repēt, & þe also loue
him accordyng to þe professyon, ye shall sone
agre. If he heare not þe cōgregaciō, then
let him be taken as an hethe. ¶ If he þe is offē-
ded be weake also, the let them þe be strong
go betwene & helpe the. And in lyke maner
if any sone agāst þe doctrine of Chryst & þe
professiō of a chrystē mā so that he be a doun-
kard, & a hozekeeper, or whatsoeuer opē sin-
ne he do, or if he teach false learnig: then let
such be rebuked opely befor þe cōgregaciō &
by þe auctorite of þe scripture. And if they
repert

of Prelates.

repēt not, let thē be put out of þ cōgregaciō
as he thē people, if they thē be not a shame
we haue no remedye but patiently to abyde
what god wil do & to pray in þ meane tyme
þ god wyll opē their hartes & giue them re-
pentance. Other law then this, Chrystes
gospell knoweth not, nor þ officers therof.
It is manifest therfore, that þ kingdom of
chryst is a spirituall kingdom w no man cā
mynyster well, & a tēporall kingdō to, as it
is sufficiently proued; because þ no mā w hi
he putteth his hand to þ plow, & lokeeth bac-
ke / is apt for þ kingdō of heaue, as Chryst
answered Luke. ix. vnto hi þ wold haue fo-
lowed hi, but wolde first haue take leaue of
his housholde. If a man put hys hād to þ
plow of gods word, to preach it, & loke also
vnto worldly busines, his plow wyll surer-
ly go a wy. And therfore sayth Chryst vnto
a othē þ wold likewise folow hi, but de-
syred first to go ād bury his father. Let þ
be so bury þ deade, but come thou ād shewe
or preach þ kingdom of god. As w ho shuld
say, he þ wyll preache the kingdom of God
(which is Chrystes gospell) truly, must haue
his harte no where else.

What officers þ apostles ordeyned i chri-
stes church, & what their offices wer to do.

Wher

The Practise

Wherfoze þe apostles folowig & obeig
þe rule, doctrine & cōmaūdmēt of our
sauour Iesus Chyſt their maſter
orderned in hys kyngdome ad congregaciō
two officers: One called after þe greke woꝝ
be byshop, in english, an ouersear: which sa-
me was called pꝛeast after þe greke, elder in
english because of his age, discreciō & sadnes
foꝝ he was as nygh as could be all wape &
riderly man: as thou seist both in the new &
old testamēt also, how the officers of the
Jewes be called the Elders of the People
because (as thou mayst wel thynke) they we-
re ouer old men. as nygh as could be. ffoꝝ
vnto age do men naturally obeye, and vnto
age doth god commaunde to geue honoure &
payenge: Leui. xix. Kysse vp befoze the ho-
rehead, and reuerence the face of the old mā
And also experience of thynges and cōlida-
ress (without which it is hard to rule wel)
is moze in age then in youth. And this
ouersear dyd put hys hādes vnto the plow
of goddes woꝝde, and fed Chyſtes flocke
and tended them only without lokyng vnto
any other busynesse in the woꝝlde.

An other officer they chose, and called
hym Dracon after the greke, amynyste in
english, to mynyſtre the almesse of the peo-
ple

Of Prelates.

ple into the poze and needpe. ffor in the congregation of christ, loue maketh euery mans gytte and goodes comune vnto the necessitye of hys neyghboure. Wherfore the loue of god beynge yett hore in the hartes of men, the rych that had the substance of thys worldes goodes, brought of thervz aboundaunce grete plentye vnto the sustentation of the poore, and deliuered it into the Handes of the Deacons. And vnto the helpe of the Deacons were wydowes of .lx. yere old, holy, vertuous, and destitute of frendes, chosen to tende and wayte vppon the sycke and to washe the sayntes fete that came from one Congregation vnto an other / whether for any busynesse or for feare of Persecucion. And these commune goodes of the churche offered for the succour of the poore, grewe in all churches so Exceedyngly, that in some congregacion it was so much that it was sufficiente to Mayntayne an hoste of men. In so much that tyrants dyd oft tymes persecute the christen for those commune goodes, as thou seist in the lyfe of. S. Laurence the deacon of Rome.

And moreouer the couetousnes of the prelates was the decaye of christendome and the encreasyng of the kyngdome of Mahometts

The Practycle

mette ffor by the first springing of the em-
pyre of, Mahomete, the Emperoures, kin-
ges, and greate lordes of chrystendome had
geuen their treasure so myghtely vnto the
church, what after great victories, & what
at theyr deathes, that their successours we-
re not able to mainteyne battell against the
Saracenes and Turkes (for the woorld
was not yet in such captiuitie & they coulde
make theyr subiects sweere on hooks what
they were worth & rayse vp taxes at theyr
pleasur) so that a certen wyttter of stories
sayth: The prelates gaped when the laye
men wolde take the warre vpon the agaynst
the Turkes, and the lay men looked when the
prelates wolde laye out their money to ma-
ke the warre with all, and not to spend it in
worle vse, as the most part of the were wont
to do/spendynge the moneye that was gow-
ten with almeas and bloude of martirs vpon
pou goodly plate and greate vessels of gold
de and syluer, without care of things to co-
me, despising God whome they worshyp-
ped for their belues sake onely and also mā.
Moreouer it was the custome euen then
(sayth the auctor) to axe what the bishoppe
he was worth, ye and to leaue a worle for a
better, or to kepe both with a vniō. And at the
same

Of prelates.

same time Flavius the debitor of the Emperour, came to Rome to confirme the Pope in his se, to the Emperours authoritie, for the electiō of þ pope wast þe nothyng worth, except it had bene cōfirmed by þ emperour, and he founde so great treasure in the church of saynt Ihon Latran, þ for dysdayne which he had þ they shuld e haue such treasure in store & not to helpe the emperour in his warres against the Turkes. seing his souldiers lacked wages, he toke it away with violence against the wyll of þ prelates, of which he exyled some, and payde his owne men of warre with one part & toke an other part vnto him self, & lent the thyrde parte vnto the Emperour: whiche must nedes haue bene a great treasure in oꝝ the church.

By what meanes the prelates fell from Chryst

The office of a Bpshop was a roume at the begynnyng, that no man coueted and that no man durste take vppō him, save he only which loued chryst better then hys owne lyfe. For as Chryst saith that no man myght be hys disciple, excepte

The Practyse

stepte that he were ready to forsake lyfe and
all: eue so myght that officer be sure that it
wold coste hym hys lyfe at one tyme or an
other for bearing record vnto the truth. But
after that the multitude of the chrysten we
re encreased, and many great men had re-
ceaued the fayth, than both landes and ren-
tes as well as the other goodes, were geuen
vnto the maintenaunce as well of the clere-
gye as of the pooze: because they gaue them
no tythes to the priestes, nor yet now we do
saue in certeyne countreys: for it is to much
to geue almesse, offerings, landes and ty-
thes also. And then the byshops made the
whiche they call ppeest, and kepe the name
bisshop vnto themselves.

But out of the deacons sprange all the
myschefe. For thow their handes wende
all thynge: they ministred vnto the clergye,
they ministred vnto the pooze, they were in
fauoure with great & small. And when the
bisshops office begā to haue rest & to be ho-
norable, then the deacons through fauoure
and gyftes clam vp ther vnto, as lyghtlye he
that hath the old Abbots treasure, succedeth
with vs. And by the meanes of their practi-
se & acquaintance in the world, they were mo-

Of Prelates.

re subtile and woorldly wyse then the olde
bysshops, and lesse learned in Goddes woꝛ-
de, as oure prelats are: when they come fro
studyneshyppe in Gentlemens houses, and
from surueing of greate mens landis, loꝛ-
des secrets, kynges counsels, ambasadour
shyp, from warre and ministring all woꝛld
ly matters: yea, woꝛldlye mischefe: and yet
nowe they come not thence: but receaue all
and hyde there styll, yea they haue enacted The prela
by playne parlyament that they must hyde tes must be
in the courte styll oz els they may nothau de styll in
pluralitie of benefices. And then by lytle the course
and lytle they inhaunsed them selues and
turned all to them selues minysshynge the
pooze peoples parte and encreasing theyꝝ,
and ioyning accoyntaunce with greate me,
and with their power clam vp and entitled
thē with the chosing and confyrming of the
Pope and all bisshoppes, to flatter and pur
chase fauoure and defenders: trustynge mo
re vnto their woꝛldly wysdom then vnto
doctryne of Chyyst, whych is the wysdom
of God and vnto the defence of mā, then of
God. When whyle they had the plowe by
the tayle, loked backe, the plow went awoꝛre,
faythe waxed feble and faint: loue waxed
cold, the scriptur waxed darke, Chyyst was
on

The practyse

No more tene: he was in the mounte topch
holes, & therfore the bps shops wolde ha
ue a god vpon the earth whom they might
se, and therupon they beganne to dyspute
who shulde be greatest.

How the Bpshop of Rome beca
me greater then other, and cal
led him selfe Pope.



he quod worldly wisdom Hier
usalē must be þ greatest for
þ was christs sete, et factum
est, so it ca to passe for a seal
And in cōclusiō where a grea
te cytie was and much riches, ther was þ
bisshop ever greater then his fellows. A
lexander in Egypte, and Antioch in Grece,
were greater then theyr neyghbours. The
those decayng, Constantinople and Rome
waxed greate, and stroue who shuld be grea
ter. And Constantynople sayd, where the
Emperour is, there ought to be the grea
test seat and cheifest bisshop. For þ Empe
rour laye most at Constantynople, because
it was (I suppose) mygh the middes of the
empyre, therfore I must be the greatest say
de the bisshope of Cōstātinople. Nay quod

the

of prelates.

the bishoppe of Rome, though the Empe-
rour lye ne uer so muche at constantinople
yet he is called Emperour of Rome: & ro-
me is the head of þe epyr, wherfoz of right
I muste be the ffather of all waten. And
thus wether they chalenged theyr title by
þe aucthorite of God oz man, oz by peter oz
poulinge, it was all one: so they myghte be
greatest.

And great intercession was made vnto
the Emperours of both parties: but in bay-
ne a greate season: for the emperours stop-
ped their eares at such ambitious requests
longe time, tyll at the last there cam an Em-
perour called Phocas whychelaye long in Phocas.
Italy & was a very soft man & a praye for
prelates. In whose time Boniface þe thirde Pope boni-
face the 8th
was byshop of Rome, a man ambitious &
greedy vpon honour, & of a very subtil wis-
dom nothing inferiour vnto Thomas wolfer-
rardinnall of poike. This Boniface was
greate with the emperour Phocas, & with
his wylle persuations & greate intercessi-
on together, obtayned of Phocas to be called
þe cheffest of all byshops, & that his church
shulde be the cheff church. Which aucthorite
as sone as he had purchasid he sent imme-
diatly his comandmēt to the emperours po-

C was

The practyse

the chastite wherunto all the bilshopps of Almanye,
of priestes maidu. g. & every byshop shuld call all the
how it ca- priestes of his diocesse, & charge the & every
me vp. man shuld put away his wyfe vnder pay
ne of excommunicatiō which tyranny, though
great resistauce was made against it, he yet
brought to passe wth the emperours & wer
de and his owne subtiltie to gether: for the
Byshops were rysh and durst not displea
se the pope for feare of the Emperour.

As sone as Remroth & myghtie hus
ser had caught this praye, that he had com
pelled all byshops to be vnder hym and to
swore obedyence vnto hym, then he began
to be greater in the earth, and called him self
papa, wyth this interpretacion: father of
fathers. And when the Pope had exalted
his throne aboue his fellowes, then the v
nitie that ought to be amonge brethren in
Chyestes Church, brake: and diuision begā
betwene vs and the grekes, which grekes
(I suppose) were at that time the one half
of chrystendome. And when any pope thus
exhorteth them to vnitie they al werred that
he which wyl reygne ouer his brethren in
violence breaketh vnitie, & not they, & & they
wyl not be vnder his tyrannye wherunto
he calleth them vnder a colour of vnitie. And
from

Papa.

Diuision
the church.

of prelates.

From hence forth with the helpe of his bishops, which were sworne to be true legges men unto him, when tyme they were admitted to their bishoprikes of emperours and kinges, he began to lay abayse to catch the hole Emperye into his handes also.

By what means the pope invaded the Empire.

At that same season Mahomete the suctour of the secte of the turkes and saracens beganne. And as sone as he had got muche people unto him with wiles and fained miracles, he invaded the emperye of Rome in those quarters. And loke how busy Mahomet was in those parties so help was the pope in these quarters to invade the emperye (with the helpe of his sworne bishops which preached all of none other God then the Pope) whyle the emperour was occupied a farre of, in resisting of Mahomete.

mahomete
& the pope
began at
the same tyme.

Gregory

And within few yeares after, when the kinges of Italy nowe and then vexed our holpe fathers for the covetouse ambition, then Gregory the third ioyned amite woth the frenchmen, and called them to helpe, by whose power they gatte all they haue also.

the pope raised
me up by
the frenchmen
& by the
continuall

also sayll.

The praeface

Also mayntaine it vnto this daye, for if any
 hy man sens that time hether, Dyl pleased p
 pope neuer so lytle, he immediately cursed hi
 and excommunicated hym, ad proclaymed
 him nor yght inheritor, and that it was
 not lausfull to holde of him, and obseuered
 hys lordes and subiectes of theyr alleges
 auncer, and set his blessing vnto the french
 king, and remission of sinnes to go and co
 quere hys lande, the pope and french kinge
 alwaye diuiding the spoyle betwene them,
 the bilshops and all that serued god for p
 belly, preaching the popes myght how that
 he had power so to do, and all thinges to bi
 de and lose at hys will, wrestinge the scrip
 tures to serue for their purpose, corrupting
 all the lawes both of God and man to pro
 ue hys godhead with all.

pope zach
 rias the .i.
 Under richy

pipinus



Pope Zacharias first,
 in whose time hilderichus was
 kynge of fraunce, a man of gouer
 ned his royaltie (as it ofte cha
 nced) by a debilitie (as patsones preache) one
 pipine a lord of his owne & his sworn sub
 iect. This pipine set an holy bilshop to po
 pe Zacharias that he shuld helpe to make
 hym kynge of fraunce, and he wold be his
 defen,

of prelates.

Defender in Italy (as the manner of scawle
horses is, the one to claw the other) & Za-
charias answered that he was more wor-
thy to be kyng that ruled the Realme and
toke the laboures, than an ydle shadowe
went vp and downe and did nought. And
so vpon that the lordes of Fraunce by the
persuasions of the prelates, consented vnto
Dapine, to thrust downe their right kin-
ge, vnto whom they were sworne, ynd ma-
de a monke of him. And both the lordes &
also Dapine toke dispensacions for theyr
thes of our holy father, and were forswor-
ne. Thus was our holy father the Pope
crepte vp in to the consciences of men with
hys false interpretation of byndyng and lo-
snyng, good. viij. hundred yeres ago.

Then came Pope Stephanus the se-
cond out of whose habes Estulphus
kyng of Lombardie wold faine ha-
ue scratched somwhat, for he thought that
the holye fathers gathered to faste, and had
all readye raked to muche vnto them. But
the new kyng Dapine of France wagged
of hys duetie and service promysed ad min-
defull of old friendshippe, and hopinge for
parte of the pape, came to succoure the po-
pe

pope steue
the second
estulphus

The practice

pe and when he had subdued the King of Lombardye, he gaue vnto our holy father or rather to saynt Peter that hungry begger, greate prouinces & contries in Lombardye and in Italye, with the yle corfica and many greate cyties, of which some perteyned vnto the Emperour: being then at Constantinople: & yet the Emperour had sent befoze vnto king Pipine that he shuld not geue of his townes vnto the pope.

But Pipine answered that he cam for the same intent, & to inhaunce our holy father, And our holy father receaued them.

And thus the Empyre was deuided in two partes: the Pope and the frenching partyng the one halfe betwene them. And as the Emperour decayed, the Pope grew. And as the pope grew, so the secte of Mahomete grew, for the Emperour (halfe his empyre lost) was not able to defend him selfe against the infidels. And the pope wold suffer no help hence to come for two causes: One, lest the Emperour shuld recouer his Empyre agayne, and an other because þe prelates of þe grekes wold not submitte them selues vnto his godheade as þe prelates of these quarters of þe world had done.

After

After Pipine raygned his sone grea
 re Charles whō we cal Charlemay
 ne wh knew non other God but p
 Dope nor any other waye to heauen then
 to do the Dope pleasure. ffor the Dope ser
 ued him for two purposes: One to dispe
 re wyth hym for what soeuer mischefe he
 did: an other, to be stablished in the Empe
 re by his helpe, for without his fauour he
 wist it wold not be: so greate a God was
 our holye father become already in those
 dayes.

This pope steuen in his latter daies fell
 at variaunce with Desiderius king of Lo
 barde, aboute the archbisshoppe of Ra
 uenna.

After Steuen succeeded Adria f fir
 ste with whom Desiderius the king
 of Lombardy wold fayne haue ma
 de peace, but Pope Adrian wolde not.
 And shortly vpon that the brother of this
 Charlmayn which raygned wyth hym in
 halfe the dominion of ffrance, dyed, who
 se wife for feare of charles, fled with hir ii
 sonnes vnto Desiderius king of Lo bar
 dy for succoure. Desiderius was gladd
 of their comming trusting by the means

Steuen.
 Desideri
 us king of
 lombardy.

The practife

of these two chylderen to obtaine fauour among many of the ffrenchmen, and so to be able to resist charles, if he wold medle, and to bypnye Italy vnto the ryght Emperour againe, and wold haue had that pope Adrian shuld haue annointed them kinges in their fathers roume. But Adrian refused that to do for he sawe charles mygh be and mete for hys purpose and was as wilpe as Desyderius, and thought to kepe oute the right Emperour & be Emperour of Rome him self, though he gaue an other the name for a reason tyll a moze cōuenient time came.

Then Desiderius warred vpon the pope iuris dictis. And Adrian sent to Charles, and Charles came with his armpe and drave out desyderius and his sonne, which sonne fled vnto the ryght Emperoure to Constantinople. And Charles and the Pope dyuided the kingdome of Lombardy betwene them And Charles came to Rome And the Pope and he were swozne together that who soeuer shulde be ennemy vnto the one, shuld be ennemy also vnto the other.

This Adrian gathered a counsell immediately of an. C. liii. bisshoppes, abbottes and

of prelates.

and religious parsones, & gaue vnto Charles and his successours the empyre of Rome, and ordeyned that the ryght and powe so chose the pope, shuld be hys. and that no byshop shuld be consecrate tyll he had obtained of hym both consent and the ornaments of a byshop also (whych they now bye of the pope vnder payne of cursing, & to be deliuered vnto black Sathan the deuell, and losse of goodes. Dist. lxxij.

And Leo the chyce which succeeded Adrian, confirmed þe same, & crowned Charles Emperour of Rome for like serunce done vnto hym. And then there was apointment made betwene the Emperours of Constantinople and of Rome and the places assigned how farre the borders of ether empyre shuld reach. And thus of one empyre was made twayne. And therfore the empyre of Constantinople for lacke of help, was shortly after subdued of the Turkes.

The sayd Leo also called Charles the moost chrysten kynge because of his good sernice: which tytle the kynges of Fraunce vse vnto this daye, though many of them be neuer so vnchristened. As the laste Leo called oure kinge the defender of the faith. And as this Pope Clemens calleth the duke of

The practise

of **Charles** the eldest sone of the holy see
of **Rome**, for non other vertue nor pro-
perty y anye man can knowe save that he
hath bene all his lyfe a pickequarrell and a
cruell and unryghtuous bloudshedder
as his father that sitteth in that holy se is.
So now aboute seven hondred yeres to be
a Christen kyng, as to fyght for the Pope,
and most chrysten that most fyghteth & slayeth
most men for his pleasure.

**the lyfe of
Charles**

This Charles was a great conquerour
that is to saye a great tiraunte, and ouer-
came many nacions with the swerde, and
as the Turke compelleth vnto his ffayth,
so he compelled them with violence vnto the
ffayth of Christ, sayth the stories. But (alas)
Christis ffayth wher vnto the holyghost on-
ly draweth mennes hartes thow we preas-
ching the worde of truth and holy luyninge
acording thereto, he knew not, but vnto
the pope he subdued them and vnto this su-
persticious ydelatry, wher we vse clene cōtra-
ry vnto the scripture.

Practise.

Whoeuer at the request and great
desyre of his mother, he maryed the dou-
ghter of Desyderius kyng of Lombardy
but after one yere vnto the great dys-
pleasure of his mother he put her awaye
agayne.

of prelates.

again: but not without the false subtilty
of the pope thou mayest be sure, neither
out his dispensacion. For how could
Charles haue made warre for the Popes
pleasure with Desiderius his father, and
haue thrust him out of his kingdome, and
banyshe his Sonne for euer, deuydinge
his kingdome betwene him and the pope as
long as he has bene his wyfe.

And therfore the pope with his aucto-
rité of byndyng and lousinge, loosed the
bodes of that matrimonie (as he hath ma-
ny other lens, and dayly doth for lyke pur-
poses) to the intent that he wold with the
swerde of the french kyng put the kyng-
dome of Lombardy that was somewhat
to nye him out of the way: by the reaso of
whose kynges his fatherhode coulde not
raygne alone nor assygne or sel the By-
shopps of Italy to whome he lusted as
at his pleasure.

He kept also .iiij. concubines, and laye
with two of his owne daughters thereto.
And though he wist howe that it was not
unknowne, yet his lustes being greater the
great Charles, he wold not wete nor yet
refrayne.

Aug

The practise

And be ponde all that, the sayinge is
þ in hys olde age a whoze had so bewitched
him with a ring & a pearle in it, ad I wote
not what ymagerye grauen therin that he
went a saute after her as a Dogge after a
bitch, and the doctehed was beside hym self
and hoke out of hys Wynde: in somuche
whē the whoze was dead, he could not des-
parte from the Deade Corps, but caused it
to be Enbaulmed and to be Carped woth
hym whether so euer he Wente, so that all
the wyldes wondred at him, tyll at the last
hys lordes accombyed woth carpenge her
from place to place, and ashamed that so
olde a Man, so grete an Emperoure and
such a most chrysten kyng, on who, & who-
se dedes euery Mannes eyes were sette,
shuld dote on a dead hoze, toke counseil what
shuld be the cause. And it was concluded
that it muste needs be by enchauntement.
Then they wente vnto the cophyne, & ope-
ned it and sought, and founde thys ringe
on her finger: which one of the lordes toke
of and put it on his owne synger. When
theringe was of he, commaunded to burye
her, regarding her no longer. Nevertheless
he caste a phantasye vnto thys Lorde and
beganne to dote as faste on hym, so that he
myght

of prelates.

might neuer be out of syght: But where
 our Charles was there must that lord al
 so be, and what charles dyd, that must he be
 pzeupe vnto: vntill that thys lord percea-
 uing that it came because of this enchann-
 ed ryng, for very paine and tedyousnesse
 toke and cast it into a well at acun in douchy
 land And after þ the ryng was in the wel,
 the Emperour coulde neuer departe from
 the towne, but in the sayde place where the
 ring was, cast though it were a foule mar-
 reffe, yet he blyt a goodly monasterye in þ
 woꝛship of our lady, and thether brought
 relikes, from whence he coulde gett the said
 pardons to sanctifye the place and to make
 it moze haūted. And there he lyeth and is a
 sainte, as ryght is. for he dyd for chrystes
 bicar as much as the grete Turke for ma-
 homete: but to saue hys Holynesse that he
 myght be canonysed for a saint, they sayne
 in his lyfe that hys abydyng there so con-
 tinuallye was for the hote bathes sake, he
 be there.



After Charlemain, he was þ nult
 was emperour he was a verye
 paciēt mā (an other phoeas) an
 other pzap for þ pope) & someke
 and soft, that scacelye he coulde be angrye

The prestite

Pope steue
the .iiij.

at any thyng at all. Whan oure holy fa-
thers had sene his water and spyed what
complexion he was / they chose Steuen p
iiij. of the name Pope with out his know-
lege and bad him nother good morowe nor
good eve nor once god spede about the mat-
ter, against theyr own graunt vnto hys fa-
ther for his good seruice. And hys softnes
was yet somewhat dyspleased there with in
as muche as the electyon of the Pope par-
tayned vnto his right. But the Pope sent
Ambassadours and wrote al the excuses
that he could and cam after him self to tra-
uce to him, & pleased him and crowned him p
re emperor and passed the tyme a season
with him, and they became verpe famylier
to gether.

Pope pat
the .v.

After that, they chose Paschalis pope of
p same maner, which phalsalis sent imme-
diatly legates vnto the emperor softe le-
wes excusing him selfe and sayeng: that it
was not his faute but that the clergy and
the comen people had drawen hym therto
with violence agaisf his will. Then p em-
perour was content for that ones and bad
they shuld no more do so, but that p old or-
dinaunce ought to be kept. The softnesse
of this Lewes did him much care. For he
was

of p[re]lats.

was after p[re]lonsd of his owne fone to the
helpe of pope Gregory the fourth.

After this mans dayes the popes ne-
ver regarded the Emperours / nor did the
clergy of Rome sue any more to the empe-
rour, ether for the electiō or cōfirmaciō of
the pope. Moreover after this Lewis the
re was new emperour in christēdō of any
power or able of his owne might to cor-
rect any pope nether was there any kynge
that could correct the outrages vices of the sp[iritu]al-
ty of his owne realme after this tyme
for this Lewis lefte .iiij. sonnes amonge
which he deuided the realme of Fraunce
and all douchēd. Which came for pride &
disdayne that one shuld haue more then an-
other fell together (as we say) by the ear-
res / eche destroyeng others power / so that
fraunce was after ward of no might to do
any great thig. And then the pope reigned
in Italy alone without care of any Empe-
rour: in so much that Nicholas the first pope
decreed that no secular prince or emperour
shuld haue ought to do or be at the coun-
sels of the clergy. And after that pope ad-
vised the seconde was chose pope & ep[iscop]ours debite
begin in Rome and not ones spoken to of
the matter.

And

The practice

And when the emperours ambassadours
resdained, they answered who can relea-
se þe rage of the peple, & prayed the to be co-
tent & to salute him as pope. And Adrian
the third decreed that they shuld not abyde
ad taye for the Emperours confirmation
or aucthoritie in chosing the pope, andh att
the pope onely shuld call a generall council,
and not the emperour, or if the Emperour
wold presume that to do, the councill shul-
de be of none effecte though all the prelats
of christendom were there, & though what
soever they did were but **G D S** worde.
So mighty was the beast now waxed
when he oncs began to raygne alone. And
from this tyme he therwarde persished þe
powe of the Emperours and the vertue of
þe popes, saith platina in the lyfe of popes.
For sins that tyme as there was none em-
perour of myght, so was there no pope of
any vertue

After thys lewes, the empyre of fraunce
and of all douthlande was diuided be-
tweene his thre sonnes which (as I sayde)
fought one with an other and destroyed þe
strength of the empyre of fraunce. And fro
that tyme to this, which is aboue. vij. hun-
dred yeres, thou shalt reade of fewe po-
pes

of prelates.

pes that haue not led their lyues in bloud-
shedding/in so much that if thou consyde
the storyes well, thou shalt easely perceaue
that there hath bene slayn about theyr cau-
se farre aboue .xl. C. thousand me, besides
þ there hath bene but fewe princes in chris-
tendom that hath not bene busyed and cō-
bzed a greate parte of his lyfe about their
mater. Eþther in warres begonne at their
setting on, ether in ceasing scismes oz di-
uision that hath bene amonge the clergye
who shuld be pope, oz struing of bysshops
who shulde be greatest/as betwene the bis-
shop of Worke and Caunterbury in Eng-
land & betwene the bisshops of Englāde
& Wales, wherof al þ chronycles be ful, oz
in refozming friers oz monks, oz in sleing
them that vttered their false hypocrisy to
goddes woozde.

When the Emperour was downe, &
no man in chzistendom of any powz to be
feared, then every nacion fel vppen others
and alllandes were at variaunce betwene
them selues. And then as the Danes cam
into England and vexed the Englishmen,
and dwelt there in spyte of their hartes/ea-
uen so came straunge nations whose na-
mes were scarce hearde of before in these

The epistle

Mandales
Hunnes
Gothes.

quarters (as the Mandales, Hunnes and
Gothes) and ran thowout all christendō
by. C. thousands together, and subdued þ
landes and dwelt therein maugre the inhabi-
tours, as thou mayest se in Douchlond
how diuerse nations are inclosed in þ mid-
des of þ land of a straunge tongue which
no douchman vnderstandeth: and that rule
continued wel. viij. or ix. scoze or. ij. hūdrēd
yeres. And in all this ceason, who so euer
wan the maystye/ him, the spiritualtye
receaued, and him they crowned king and to
him they cleue. And what so euer any ty-
raūt had robbed al his lyfe, that or most par-
te therof must he deale amōg them at his
death, for feare of purgatory. The spiry-
tualy all that ceasō preached the pope mygh-
tely, bylt abbayes for recreatyon and quiet-
nesse, slypninge them alwaie for sayntes
which purchased the priuyliges, or fought
for their liberties, or disputed for the popes
powe, how so euer they lyved (but after. A.
yere whē their liues were forgootten) and if
any resisted them what so euer mischeuen
they went about, him they noted in chro-
nycles as a cruell treuntye & what so euer
misfortune chaunced any of hys posteritie
after him, that they noted also, as though

God

of prelates.

God had plagued the, because their foresa-
ther was disobedient vnto holy church / &
euer put the stories that uttered there wep-
kedness out of the way and gathered reles-
ques from whence they coude get them, &
fayned myracles, & and gaue the selues on-
ly vnto poetrye / & shut vp the scriptur / so
thys was the very tyme of wh Chyste spea-
keth. Mat. xxiii. in whych false prophetes
shuld aryse and shewe myracles and won-
ders to deceaue the very electe p[er]son had be-
ne possyble.

Inallye in thys busye woorld the
kynges of Lombardy gatte a lytle
myght / and came vppe & gayne and
were diuerse tymes Emperours / though of
no greate myght. And one Beringarius ki beringari-
ge of Lombardy began to meddle w oure us,
holy fathers busynesse. Wherfore the pope
fled vnto Ottho kyng of the saxons, w
by that tyme had gottē myght, and broughe
him into Italy against Beringariū, whych
Ottho ouercam Beringarium & was ma Ottho
de Emperour for hys labour, and thus ca-
me the Emperre fyrst vnto deucl lnde.

And Ottho recaued the emperre of one pope Jha
pope John (y thep) with this othe, I Ot the xij.

D ij tho

The practise

who do promise and swear vnto the lord
Iohn, by the father / the sone and the holy
ghooste, and by thys wod of the crosse that
maketh lyving, & by these relyques of saunc
tes, that if I come to Rome with goddes
helpe, I wyll exalte the holy church of Ro
me and the, þ gouernoure of the same, vnto
my powr: Neyther shalt thou lose lyfe nor
members, or that honour that thou hast by
my wyll, counsell, consent or settinge a wor
ke. Moreover I wyll make in rome no co
stitution or ordinaunce of anye thyng that
perteyneth vnto the or vnto þ Romaynes
without thy counsell. And whatsoeuer
of the landes of saynt Peter cometh vnto
our handes, I wyll dilpyer it the And vn
to whom soeuer I shal commit the rule of
Italy / I wyll make hi sweareth that he shal
helpe the, to defend the landes of saint Pe
ter vnto his power.

Pope Gre
goz þ. v.

And Gregoz þ. v. (when they had
gotte at the last that whiche they long ga
ped for) made this ordinaunce of chosynge
the emperour / to stablysh it with all: that
vi. lordes of Almany. iij. of the spiritualte
and. iij. of the tempozalte with the king of
Bohe the seuenth to be the odde mā & vma
pers

of prelates.

pear, shuld chose him for euer, and send hi to
þ pope to receaue his othe, and to be crow-
ned. Neuertheles the pope to kepe the Em-
perour a farre of, sendeth him his coronaci-
on home to him oftentimes moch leauer than
that he shuld come any nere, as a meke spi-
rited man, that had leuer l pue solptary and
alone, then haue his holyness sene.

A ppropze simulytude to describe our ho-
ly father.

And to see how oure holy father ca-
bp marke the ensample of an yuic-
tre: first it springeth out of þ earth
& then a while crepeth a longe by the grou-
de tyll it fynde a great tree: then it ioyne-
th it selfe byneath a lowe vnto the body of þ
tre, & crepeth vp a lytle and a lytle fayze and
softely. And at the begynning while it is yet
thyng and small that the burthe is not pera-
ceaued, it semeth glorious to garnyshe the
tre in the winter and to beare of the ceps-
ses of the wether. But in the meane tyme
it thrusteth his rootes into the barke of þ
tree to hold fast withall, and ceaseth not to
clyn byppe, tyll it be at the toppe, and aboue

The practife

all. And then it sendeth his braunches as long by the braunches of the tree, and ouer groweth all and waxeth greete, heuie and thyck and sucketh y^e moystoure so close out of the tre and his braunches, that it choketh and stiflith them. And then the foule stynnyng puye waxeth myghty in the scope of the tre and becometh a seat and a nest for all vncleane, birdes and for blinde oules which hauke in the darke and dare not come at y^e lyght.

Even so the bisshop of Rome now called P P P, at the beginning crope a longe vpon the earth, and every man trode vpon him in this worlde. But as sone as there came a chrysten Emperour, he ioynded himself vnto his fete and kyssed them, and crope vpon a lytle with begging now this priuilege, now that, now this cite now that, to fynde poore people with all and the necessary ministers of Gods word. And he entitled the Emperour with chosynge the poore and other bisshopes, and promoted in y^e spiritualty, not whom vertue and learning but whom the fauour of greete men commended, to flatter to get frendes and defenders with all.

the chosynge
of the pope
& al bissho
pes pertay
ned vnto
y^e Emperour
& kynges
once.

the almesse

And the almesse of the congregacyon
which

of prelates

which was the fode and patrimony of the
poore and necessary preachers, that he cal-
led saie Peters patrimony, saynt Peters
rentes, saynt Peters lands, saynt Peters
right; to cast a vayne feare & an hethenish
supersticiousnes into þ hertes of mē, that
no man shuld dare meadle with what soe-
uer came once into their hādes, for feare of
saynt Peter, though they ministered it ne-
uer so euell; and that they which shuld thin-
ke it none almeste to geue thē any more (be-
cause they had to much alreadye) shuld yet
gyue saynt Peter somwhat (as Nabucho-
donesser gaue his God Bel) to purchesse
an aduocate and an intercessor of saynt Pe-
ter, and that saynt Peter shuld at þ fyrste
knocke, let them in.

geue vnto
þ poore is
become. S
peters pa-
trimonye.

Danielis
xiii.

And thus with flatteringe and fayning
and vayne supersticion vnder the Name
of Saynt Peter, he crept vp and fastened
hys rootes in the harte of the Emperour,
and wpyth hys swerde clame vp aboue all
his felow bilhoppes and brought them vnder
his fete. And as he subdued them wpyth
the Emperours swerd, euen so by subiltye
& helpe of them (after that they were sworne
faythfull) he clam aboue the Emperour
and subdued hym also and made hym

stoupe

The practise

Koupe vnto his fete/and kysse them an o-
ther whyle. P^{er} a Pope Celestinus crowned
the Emperour Hentye the fift, holdyng
the crowne betwene his fete. And when
he had put þ^e crowne on /he smote it of w^{ith}
his fete agayn, sayeng : that he had myght
to make Emperours and to put them downe
agayne.

And he made a constitution that no lay
man shuld meddle w^{ith} they^r maters, nor be
in they^r counsels o^r witte what they did, &
that the Pope only shuld call the counsell/
and the Emperour shuld but defende the
Pope: p^{ro}uouided alwaye that the counsell
shuld be in one of the Popes towne, and
where the popes power was greater then
the Emperours: then vnder a p^{re}tence of
cōdempnyng some heresye/ he called a ge-
nerall counsell/ where he made one a patris-
arcke, an other Cardinal/ an other Legate,
an other Prymate, an other Archbysshop/
an other Bysshoppe, an other Deane, an o-
ther Archdeacon and so forth, as we now
see.

And as the Pope played with the Em-
perour /so did his braunches and hys mē-
bers the bisshops play in euery kingdome
Duchedom and lordshyp, in so much that þ^e
verry

of prelates.

Derp hepres of them, by whome they came Qualis pa
vp/hold nowe their lordes of them and ta- ter talis fi-
ke them for their chefe lordes. And as the lius. Good
Emperour is swozne to the pope, euen so naturall
every kyng is swozne to the bilshopes and chylderen.
prelates of the realme: and they are the che
fest in all perliamentes: yea they and their
money and they that be swoznto them and
come vp by them rule all together.

And thus the pope the father of all hy- the popys
pocrites hathe wyth fals hood and gyle per- order com-
uerted the order of the worlde and turned pared to
the rootes of the trees vpwarde and hath Chyestes.
put doune þ kingdō of chyst, & set vp þ kig
dome of the deuell whose vycar he is, and
hath put doune the ministers of chyst, and
hath set vp the ministers of Sathan, dis-
guised yet in names and garments lyke vnto
þ aūgels of lyght and ministres of righ-
tuousnes. For Chyestes kingdom is not of
the worlde Ihon. xliij. and the Popes king-
dom is all the worlde.

And Chyist is nether iudge nor diuyder
in this worlde Luke. xij. But the pope iud-
geth and deuideth all the worlde & taketh
the empyre & al kingdoms and geueth the
to whom he lusteth.

Chyist

The practice

Christ sayth Math. v. Blessed are the poore in spirit: so that the fyrst stepp in þ kingdom of Christ is humblenes or humylytiethat thou canst fynde in thyne hart to do seruice vnto all mē, and to suffer that all men treade the.

The Pope saith. Blessed be the proude and hyghminded that can clym and subdue all vnder them and mainteyne their ryght and such as wyll suffre of no man: so þ he which was yester day taken from the dong hyl and promoted this daye by his prince, shall to morrow for the popes pleasure curse him & excommunicate hym, and interdict hys royalme.

Christ sayth. Blessed be the meke or soft that be harmlesse as doves.

The pope blesseth them that can set all the world together by the eares and eyghes and slea manfully for his sake, that he maye come hote from bloudshedding to a bysshoppe as our Cardinalo, and as Saynte Thomas of Canterbury dyd: which was made bysshop in þ feld, in complete harnesse on his horsebacke and hys speare blouze by in hys hande.

Christ hath nether holes for fores, nor
for byds, nor yet wheron to lay his
head

of prelates.

head, nor prompted ought in this world
vnto his disciples: nor took any to his di-
sciple but him that had forsaken all.

The puytre the Pope hath vnder his
rootes throughout all chrystendome in eu-
ry village holes for foxes, and nestes for vn-
cleane byrdes in all his bzaunches, and pro-
myleth vnto his disciples all the promocy-
ons of the worlde.

The nether vnto Chryst a man cometh, the
lower he must descende and the higher he
must waxe: but the nether vnto the pope ye
come the hygher ye must clim and the more
ryches ye must gather whence soeuer ye ca-
gett them, to paye for your bulles, and to
purchase a glorious name & licence to wea-
re a mytre and a crosse and a pale and good
lye ornaments.

Howe the pope recraueeth his
kyngdome of the deuell, and
howe he distributeth it
agayne.

Shortlye the kingdomes of the ear-
th and the gloze of them (whiche
Chryst refused) Mathew. iiii. did
the deuell profer vnto the pope, and he im-
me

The practise

mediatlye fell frō Chꝛyst and woꝛshypped
the deuell/and receaued them. ffoꝛ by fals-
hed(as he maynteyneth them)cam he ther
to/and by falshead do al hys disciples come
therto. Who of an hundꝛed one is Pope
bisshope oz any greate pꝛelate,but ether by
necromāce oz symony oz wayting on grea
te mens pleasures/ and with coꝛruptyng
of goddes woꝛde and falshyonyng it after
theyꝛ lustes.

**The pope
Distributeth
his fathers
kingdome.**

And the Pope after he had receaued the
kyngdome of the woꝛlde of the deuell and
was become the Deuels vicar, toke vp in
lyke maner all chꝛystendom an hye, bꝛou
ght them from the mekenes of Chꝛyst vn-
to the hye hyll of the pꝛyde of Lucifer and
shewed them all the kyngdome of þe erthe,
sayinge : fall downe and woꝛshyppe me,
and I wyll geue you these. Unto the spiri
tualtye he saieth:fall from Chꝛyst ād pꝛea
che me, and take thou that cardenalshyppe,
thou þe bisshopꝛycke, thou þe Abbotshyppe,
and so fourth: thou as many benefyces as
thou wylt, and a dispensaciō foꝛ what thou
wylt. And to mōkes and fryers unlikema-
ner, take thou that hole, and thou that nest.
wyth what pꝛyuylegeye wyll despyze ād di
spensacyons of poure rules, yf ye wyll pꝛea
ches

Of pꝛelates.

ach me.

And vnto the tempoꝛaltie he saythe:
First to the Emperour, yf thou wilt fall
down & kysse my seate and sweare to hold
of me and to defend me, I geue the the em
pyꝛe.

And to al kinges in lyke maner, yf they
wyl sweare to defend hys lyberties and to
holde of him, he crowne the them. And
euen so all tempoꝛall Lordes from the hya
ghest vnto the lowest, and all officers, and
all maner subiectes, if they wyl enioyē lā
des, rentes, offices, goodes and their verye
tyues they must conne the same way.

The very whores (goddes honour vnz
regarded) as long as they dyspyle not him
and his ordinaunces, they shall haue nestes
in his rentes, and amonge his Pꝛelates.
And the theues and murtherers shall ha
ue dennes in his sanctuaries, what soeuer
they do against God, so longe as they hāg
on him.

The popes

The Apostles chose pꝛyestes to pꝛeach
Chꝛyst onely, all other thinges layde apart
and chose none but Learned and Vertu
ouse

order coma
pared to p
order of p
Apostles.

The Pope shaueth who soeuer commeth,
leuer

The practise

**The poppysh
priestes.**

latter duke of the stues then from studie
when they be Sworne he Sendeth them
vnto all greate mennes houses to preache
his godhed to be skuardes / surueyers / re-
ceauers & counsellers of all maner mysche-
ue: to corrupte wife / daughter, and mayde,
& to betray theyr owne master, as oft as
it needeth to promote their falsehead with
all. For therto are they Sworne to gether.

And when they haue done all mischefe
ther shall no man wot wherese it cometh.

The apostles chose deacons to minstre
the almes of the ryche vnto the pooze. And
the poppysh to helpe the deacons they chose widowes
widowes. of .lx. yere old, holy & destitute of frendes
to tend the sycke. And the Pope in steade of
such wedowes maketh who soeuer com-
meth / whethere she be yōg or olde, but none
saue them y be ryche & able to pay .xx. xxx.
or .xl. pounce for their proficiō, to whom
for as much more he wyll gyue a dispensa-
cion on the morowe to mary agayne. And

The poppysh in steade of suche deacons, he maketh bothe
Deacons. deacons and subdeacons which do nothin

ge at all but are hayne names without of-
fice / except it be that on some Holydays
in steade of ministringe the goodes of the
church vnto the pooze, they syng a pistle or

Gospel

of prelates.

Gospell to begge more from the poore.

And as his predecessors brought the goodes of the church vnto the poore: euen so doo his successors preache Chryste's gospell vnto his flocke.

And the almes that was geuen to the poore for the sustencacion of the poore which thou shalt see in storie that it was in some cities more than xx. xxx. yea an hundred thousand ponde, and all the landes geuen for the same purpose, they haue stolen from them & haue diuided it amonge them selues. And therewith did they at the beginning corrupt the greates men of the worlde and clamb vp to this heighth were they now be. And for þe haue they strouen among them selues this viij. hundred yeaes. And to mainteyne þe which they haue falsely gotten hath the pope stirred vp a werde of warre in all chri stendom this. viij. hundred yeaes & hath taken peace cleane out of the worlde.

When the bisshoppes, prelates and deacons were fallen and had receaued of the pope the kingdom that pertained vnto the poore people, and had robbed them and parted their patrimonie among them selues: then sprang the orders of monkes: whose profession was to abstayne fro flesh all their

The pzactise

theyr liues, to were vyle rayment, to eate but
once in the daye: and that but butter, chese, eg
ges, frutes, rootes and suche thynges that
weare not costly: and myght euery where be
founde. And they wrote booke, and wrought
diuerse thynges to get their lyuinge wyth
all. When the laye men sawe that the pzeas
tes were fallen in to suche couetuousnes
e that the Monkes were so holy: they tho
ught, these be mete men to minister our al
messe vnto the poore people. For theyr pro
fession is so holy that they can not decea
ue vs as the pzeastes do, and made the mo
nkes tutozs and ministers vnto the poore, and
gaue great Landes and rycheffe in to theyr
handes to deale it vnto the poore. When the
monkes sawe such abundance, they fell
after the ensample of the pzeastes, and toke
dispenfacyōs of the pope for their rules and
strait professiō, whiche now is as wyde as
their coules, and deuided all amonge them,
and robbed the poore once moare. And ou
er of the abbayes toke he the most parte of his
Bysshoprickes and cathedral churches, and
the moste parte of all the landes he hath
besydes that there Remayne yet so Ma
ny myghty abbayes and nunnyes ther

of prelates.

As soon as the monkes were fallen, they
sprang these beggynge fryers out of Hell,
the last kind of kate pillars, in a more vile
apparell and a more strate religion that (if
ought of relese were leste amonge the laye
men for the poore people) these horseleches
might sucke that also. Which dancibers as
soon as they had learned their craft & had
bylet them goodly & costly rustes / and their
lymiters had diuided all countrees amonge
them, to begge in / and had prepared lyupn-
ges of a certayne le / though w beggynge /
then they also take dispensacions of the po
pe for to lyue as largely & as lewdely as
the monkes.

Beggynge
fryers.

And yet vnto the laye men whom they
haue thus falselye robbed & from whiche
they haue deuyced them selues and made
them a seuerall kyngdome amonge them
selues, they leaue the payenge of tolls & cu-
stome and trybute (for vnto all the Char-
ges of the Royalmes they wyll not paye
a myte) and the finding of all the poore:
the fyndyng of scholars for the moste par-
te: The fyndyng of these forsayde horsele-
ches and carcepillers / the beggynge fryers
the reparyng of hys wayes and byddes
the buydynge and recteracions of theyre

The charge
of p lay
people.



abbayes

The practyse

abbayes and cathedrall churches, chapels colleges, for which they send out theyr pardons dayly by heapes, and gather a thousand pounde for every hundred that they bestow treuely.

If the laye people haue warre or whaſoever charge it be, they wyl not beare a myte. If the warre be theirs (as the one parte almost of all warre is to defende them) they wyl wth falschod make the beare the greatest parte, besydes that, they must leaue their wyues and childzen & go fight for them and loose their liues. And like wth se iⁿ al their charges they haue a cast to poll the laye people. The Scottes cast downe a castell of p^r byshop of durams on p^r scottish bancke called Rozam castell. And he gat a pardon from Rome for the buyldynge of it agayne, wherewith I dout not, but he gat for euery pennye that he bestowed there.

Howe the
spyzitual =
tie bestowe
theyr treas-
sure, And what do they with their store that
they haue in so grrate plenty every where:
so that the very beggyng fryers in shor-
space to make a cardinal or a pope of their
sect or to doe what feate it were for theyr
profite

of prelates.

possytt, wold not stycke to bypnyng aboute a
kynge's cause. Merely make goodly places
and parkes of pleasure and gape shypnys/
and paynte postes and purchese Wardons/
wherwyth they yet styll polle and plucke
a waie that litle where wyth þ poze which
perpthe for neade, and faulle in to greatr in
conueniences myght be somwhat holpe ad
releued, And laye vppe in stoare to haue al-
waie to paye for the defēdig of their faith
and for to oppresse the truth.

How the pope made hym a
lawe, and whp.

After that the pope wythe tyrannye
was clom vppe aboue hys brethzen
and had made all the Spprytualtie
hys subiectes and had made of them and
hym a seuerall kyngdom among them sel-
ues, and had seperated them from the laie
in all thynges, and had got pryvileges that
what so euer they dyd, no man shuld medle
wyth them: and after also he had receaued
the kyngdoms of the earth of Sathan and
was become hys vicare to dystribut them,
and after that the Emperoure was fallen
in lyke maner at hys fete and had worshipp

Thi practise

ped hym as God, to receaue hys empyre of him, and all kings had done lyke wise to be anoynted of him and to be crowned of him, and after that the woylde both greate and smale had submitted them selues to receaue the beastes bagge: then because that chrystes doctryne was contrary vnto all such kingdomes, and therfore had no law ther in houe to rule it he went, and made him a seuerell lawe of hys owne makynge, which passed in cruelty and tyzanny, the lawes of all hethen priestes.

And in his lawe he thrust in fapned gyftes of old emperours, that were out of me
What submozy, sayeng that the emperour Constantine the p^otinus had geuen vp the empyre of Rome pe v^oleth to vnto. S. Syluester, which is proued a falsablysh
le lye for diuerse causes: one that saith siluester bring so holly a man as he was / wolde hys kyng^o not haue receaued it contrarie to his ma^osters coma^ondemētes & doctrine: an other that the emperours raygned in Rome many yeaeres after and all bisshopes sued vnto the emperour and not to the pope, which was but bisshope of Rome only / & not called father of fathers. Whozeo uer^o p^o no au^otentyke stozie maketh mencion that any emperoure gaue them their patrimonye / but
that

of prelates.

that Pipine which falsely & with strength
inuated the empire gaue it vnto him. The
put he in the graunt of Phocas, then the
gift of pipine confirmed by the great char
les: then a fayned relese of the electiō of
pope/ geue vpon agayne vnto pope Pascha
le by the emperour Lewis. For they the
selues had graunted vnto charlemayne, &
his successours for euer the eleccion or de
nomination of the pope & bisshopes to flat
ter him, with all, & to make him a faythfull
defender, and that in a generall Counsell
which (as they say) can not erre. Neuerthe
lesse pope Paschal though he beleued the
counsell coude not erre, yet he thought the
somewhat ouersene, so make so long a gra
unt, & therfore he purchased a relese of ge
le lewes as they pzetēd But verely it is mo
re lykely that they fayned that graunte to
excuse their tyranny after they had takē
electiō into their hādes agayne wyth violē
ce/ whē the emperours were weake & not
able to resyst the. as they fayned the gift of
Cōstātine, after they had inuaded the empi
re with lubrylty and falschod. And last of al
they brought in the Rite of Otto with the
orde that now is vsed to chose the episcour
Horn

The practise
Howe the pope corrupteth the
scripture and why.

Mouer lest these his lyres shuld
be spyed & least happily the empe-
rours following myght saye, our
predecessours had no power to bynde vs,
nor to minish our might: And least kinges
following, shuld say after the same maner:
that the sword & full power to punish euil
doers indifferently is geuen of God to euery
kyng for hys tyme, and therfore þ they &
decessour coulde not bynde them contrarye
vnto the ordynance of God: but rather þ
it was vnto theyr dāpnation to make such
graūtes: & þ they dyd not execute theyr of-
fice. And therfore þ foule & mylshapē mā-
ster, gate hym to the scrypture & corrupted
it wyth false expolitions: to proue þ such
aucthoritie was geuen hym of God: & chal-
lenged it by þ aucthoritie of Peter. saying:
that peter was the head of Chrysts church
and that Chryst had made hym lord ouer
the apostles hys fellowes, in þ he had hi sea-
de hys shepe & lābes John þ last: as who
shuld saye þ paule which came longe after,
was not commaunded to frade as speccial-
ly as peter, which yett wold take no auctho-
rytie

Of prelates

title ouer the bodyes or ouer þe fapther of
 them whych he fed, but was theyr seruaunt
 for Chyestes sake, Chyist euer the lord and
 head. And as though þe other apostles we
 re not lykewyse as specially commaunded
 as Peter: And as though we now and all
 that here after shall loue chyist, were not co
 manded to leade chyestes flocke, every mā
 in his measure, as well as Peter. Are not
 we commaunded to loue our nryghbours
 as our selues, as well as Peter: Why then
 are we not comaunded to care for his flo
 ke as well as Peter?

Moreover if to leade Chyestes shepe is
 to be greatest (as no doubt to leade chyistes
 flocke is to be greate and moste to leade, is
 so be greatest) in þe office thogh peter was
 greate, yet paule was greater) ho we com
 meth that the pope by that aucthozytie cha
 lengeth to be greatest, and yet thys. viii. hu
 dred yeres leadech not at al: but poysoneth
 their pasture with the venamous leuen of
 his tradicions & wyth wrestyng the texte
 vnto a contrary sence?

Then came he to thys texte Mat. xvi
 Thou arte peter and vppon this rocke I
 wyll byld my congregation or church. And
 sayth Antichyist the carnall beast / peter is

The practise

Faith is þ
roote wher
in Chrysts
churche is
bulte.

the rocke wheron the church of Chryst is
bult, and I am his successoure, and therfo
re the head of chrystes church. When chryst
ment by the rocke, the confession that Peter
had confessed, sayeng: Thou art chryst
the sonne of the lyving god, which arte co
me into this worlde. This fayth is the roc
ke, wheron chrysts church is bult. For who
is of chrystes church, but he only that bele
ueth that Chryst is Gods sonne, come into
to this world to saue siners: This fayth
is it, agaynst whell gates can not prevaile.
This faith is it, which sauech the cōgre
gacion of chryst and not Peter.

Then he goeth forth vnto that which fo
loweth: Vnto the I wyl geue the keyes of
the kingdome of heauen/and what soeuer
thou bindest in earth, it shalbe bound in hea
uē. &c. And, sayth he, in þ he sayth what soe
uer thou bidest in erth, he excepteth nothi
ge, therfore I may make lawes & bid both
king and emperoure. When chryst/as he
had no worldly kīgdom, euē so he spake of
no worldly binding, but of binding of syn
ners. Chryst gaue his disciples the keye
of the knowlege of the law of God, to bind
all synners/and the keye of the promyses
to loue all that repent and to let them into

The keyes

the

of prelates.

The mercy that is made up for vs in christ.

Then cometh he vnto an other text whiche Christ rehearseth Mathe. last, sayeng: All power is geuen men in heauen & earth, go ye therfore, and teach all nacions, baptizing them in the name of the father, and of the sonne, and of the holy gost, teachinge them to kepe all that I commaunded you: And behold I am with you vnto the worldes ende: And sayth the pope, Christ hath all power in heauen and earth, without exceptiō upon, and I am christes vicar, wherfore all power is mine: and I am aboue all kinges and Emperours in temporall iurisdiction and they but my seruantes to kisse one my fete only but my. N. also if I list not to haue the stone so low. Whiche christ as I said because he had no temporall kingdom, euen Christes so he ment of no temporall power, but of power is to wer to saue sinners: which they professe of, saue sinners the text declarerh by that he sayth, go ye therfore, and teach and baptize: that is preach this power to all nacions: and wash of their sinnes thorow fayth in the promises made in my bloude.

of this man

Then he cometh vnto an other text. He that iudgeth bye. vii. which is. The presthode being translated he with. slated, the law must needs be translated at textes.

so.

The practife

So. Now sayth the pope, the priesthode is translated vnto me, wherfore it perceyvneth vnto me to make lawes and to bind every man. And the pistle meaneth no such thinge, but proueth to euidently þ the ceremonies of Moyses must cease. For the priestes of the old testament must nedes haue bene of the tribe of Levi as Aaron was, whose dutye for euer was the offering of sacrifices. Wherfore when that priesthode ceased, the sacrifices and ceremonies ceased also. Now that priesthode ceased in Christ, which was a priest of the orde of Melchisedek and not of the orde of Aaron for the he must haue bene of the tribe of Juda & of the sede of Dauid. Wherfore they that are vnder Christs priesthod are vnder no sacrifices or ceremonies. And of this manner iugle they wyth all the scriptur, wher the falsched lest the lay men shuld perceaue wyth reauinge the proceſſe of the Textes is all their feare what soeuer they ppretende.

Moreouer þ thou mayst perceaue the popes falsched, marke: Christ sayd vnto peter, I wyl geue and not I giue, nether sayde he I wyl giue vnto the only: Therfore
1048

of prelates.

like in the .xx. chapere of Jho where he gaue them the keyes after hys resurrection / & shouldest see that he gaue them vnto all indifferentlye sayenge: As my father sente me so send I you. Whether sent he them in to all the worlde / and vnto all nations. What to do: to preach & law that & people might repēt, & the promyses & they might beleue in Chyyst for & rempyson of synnes, sayeng: receaue the holie gost, who so euer & sprin ye forgeue, they shalbe forgeuen. by which holy gost he gaue them vnderstandynge of the scripture and of all that they shuld preach: as thou mayest see Luk last, where he opened theyr wittes to vnderstande the scripture and sayd, that repentance and forgyuenes of synnes muste be preached in hys name to all Nations, and that they were wytnesses to preach it. Wherby thou seest & to Bynde and to Loose is but to preach and tell the people theyr fautes, and to preach merce in chyrte to all that repent.

And when he sayeth / all power is geuen me: he saith not go thou Peter and preach but sayeth vnto all indifferentlye / go ye & preach this power geuen me of my father to saue al that repent, and to dampne them that

Chyyst gaue all hys Apostles is he aucthoritye.

To bynde & loose is to preach.

The practice

that repent not but follow þ lustes of their
flesh, wyth full desire to lyue beastlie being
ennymyes vnto the lawe of god.

Notes. And Math. xviij. Peter asked chryst how
oft he shuld forgive hys brother / whether
seuen tymes . And chryste sayed / seyntye
tymes seuen tymes . As who shuld saye
as ofte as he repenteth and asketh forgive-
nesse.

Now though this were spoken vnto Pe-
ter only , because Peter onely moued the
question / yet it apertayneth not vnto vs all
as well as vnto Peter . Are not we as mu-
che bounde to forgive oure neyghbours
that repent and aske forgiveness, as Peter?
Yes verelye . But because Peter onely ask-
ed þ questiō, therfore did Chryste teache vs
by Peter . If an other had asked / he wolde
haue taught vs by that other . And in lyke
maner when chryst asked who saye ye that
I am: yf any other of the Apostles whiche
belueed it as well as Peter , had sayde as
Peter did, thou arte chryste, the sone of the
lyvinge god / which arte come in to the worl-
de of synners, to saue them: vnto him wolde
Chryst haue answered / as he dyd to Peter
that vppon the rocke of that his confession
he wolde haue bylt hys church, and wolde
haue

of prelates.

haue Promysed hym keyes as well as he
dyd Peter. Yea and in the .xviii. chaptre of
Mathew, Chryst saith to al the Apostles /
yea and to all congregatyons where syn-
ners be, that what soeuer they bound shul
be boude & what soeuer they loosed shul
be loosed. A woman
hath power
to bynde.

Moreouer euerie man and woman
that knowe Chryst and hys doctrine, haue
the keyes and power to bynde and loose :
in an ordre yet and in their measure, as ty-
me place and occasion geueth and proua-
telye. Mape not a wyfe, yf hyr husband
synne agaynste God and hyr, and take a no-
ther woman / tell hym hys faute betwene
hym and hyr secretlye, and in good maner
humbllye, and bynd hys conscience with the
law of god: And yf he repente may he not
for geue hym ad loose hym as well as the
Pope: Yea, and better to, as longe as the
synne is secret, in as muche as he synneth
specially against hyr, and not against the po-
pe.

And so mape the sone do to the father,
and a seruaunte to the master and euerie
man to hys neyghboure, as thou seyst in
sarde. xviii. chaptre of Mathew. Now
be it to bynde and loose in the conscience by
open

The practife

Open preaching perteyneth vnto the officers that are apoynted thereto. And to bynde ad loose open Synners, and them that wyl not repēt tyll they be complayned on vnto the congregacion, perteyneth vnto the congregacion.

Finally there were many that preached christ at Rome, yet Peter cam thither peter was if he cam euer thither: as Paule and many not so grea ny other. Had they not auctoritie to bynd rest by any and loose? Or els how did they conuerter auctoritie the people? Peter was also an Apostle and geuen hi of went from place to place as Paule did, ad Chyeste.

as Paule ordeyned Bysshopes in euerye place to teach the people, so no doubt dyd Peter. Why then might not those Bysshopes calenge auctoritie by Peter as well as they of Rome: they saye also in their owne legēdes that Peter had his seate at Antioch first. Did he runne to Rome lyuyng no man behinde him to teach the people at Antioch? God forbidd. Why then myght not that Bysshop calenge Peters auctoritie? They wyl haply say soner then proue it, that Peter dyed at Rome, ad therfore his auctoritie is greatest ther. Then by that rule christes power is no where so full as at Hierusalem. But what hath Chyeste

of prelates.

Unvulnerable kyngdom to do with places.

Where Chyestes Gospell is, there is his po Chyestes
wert full and all hys auctorite as well i one powr is in
place as in an other. the gospell

Spynallye to gett auctoritie whence so es
uer, they can snatch it, they ioyne Paule w
Peter in their awne lawes Distinctio. xxiij
sayinge: By the auctoritie of peter and paull is ca'
Paule. Whych is cleene agaynst the selues. led to help
For they say in their awne lawe in the pre
sence of the superior, the power of the infer
ior ceaseth, and is none at all. Nowe if
Peter be greater then Paule, then by that
rule, where Peter is present there Paule
is but a subiecte and wpythoute auctoritie:
As where Christ is present bodilye and prea
cheth hi selfe, there þ apostles geue by thie
auctoritie, and hold their peace and sitt doun
at hys fete, and become scolers and herken
to.

Wherfore in that they ioyne Paule with
Peter, and chalége thier superiouritie as wel
by þ auctoritie of Paule as of Peter, there
they make Paule felow and equall with pe
ter. And thus it is false that Peter was
greater then hys fellowes, but the blynd ou
les care not what they houle, seying it is ni
ghte

The practice

And the daye lyght of gods worde, shut by
that no man can spy them.

Moreover in this terme Peters seate
they iugle a pale (as in infinite other) say-
ing that Peters seate, is the chefe seat / but
what Peters seat is that they tell you not
for wylste ye that ye shuld come perceave
that they lye. Peters seate is no stole or
chayre (for what hath the kingdō of Christ
to do in such baggage) but, it is a spiritual
thyng. Christ sayth in the gospell Math.
xxij. The Scribes and pharyzees syt on
Moses seate. What was moyses seate ther,
a chayre / or the temple / or the churchs, or sy-
nagoge of the land. Nay verely, for moyses
came neuer there. But Moses seate was
Moses lawe and doctrine. Eue so peters
seate, is peters doctrine, & gospell of christ
in peter taught. And the same doctrine is
Peters keyes: so that peters seate, Peters
keyes and Peters doctrine is all one thing
Nowe is peters doctrine, Pauls doctri-
ne & the doctrine of all the .xij. Apostles in-
differently, for they taught all one thyng.
Wherefore it followeth, that peters keyes,
and peters seate, be the keyes and seate of
Paul also, & of all the other .xij. Apostles
and are nothing save the gospell of Christ

And

of prelates.

And thus as Peters doctryne is no better then Pauls but one thing, even so Peters seate is no greter nor hier or holper then þe seate of þe other. xij. Peters seate now is chrystes seate / Chrystes gospel on whych all the appostles sate & on whych this daie sitteth all they only that preache chryst truly Wherefore as Antichrist preacheth not peters doctrine (which is chrystes gospel) so he sitteth not on peters seate, but on the seate of sathan whose vicar he is and on the seate of his owne lawes and ceremonies and false doctryne wher vnto he compelleth all men wythe byolence of swerde.

Then he clame to purgatorie with the ladder of the sayde texte, what so ever thou **Purgatori** bindest in earth. & c. purgatorie sayeth he, is in earth: wherfore I am lord ther to. Nevertheless as he can proue no purgatorie / so can he not proue that yf ther were any / it shuld be in the earth. It myght well be i þe elemente or sphere of fyre vnder þe mone as well as in the earth. But to bynd & ad loose, is as I haue aboue sayde / to preache and to fede and with Chrystes doctryne to purge soules. And they that be dead be not of the flocke which chryst had Peter fede, but they that lyue onlye.

f

then

The practise

Motors.

Othes.

testamētis.

Then clam he vyppē wyth the same lade
bet styll ouer all bowes and professions of
all religious parsones, and ouer othes ma
de betwene man and man. to dispence wyth
them; and ouer all mennys testaments to
alter thē. ffor what thou makest an hospys
tall, that will he shortly make a college of
preastes, or a place of religion, or what he
lusteth. Thē all maner monkes and fryers
and lyke daffe toke dispensations of hym
for the ordinaūces of theyr olde founders

And because, as they thought, they had
prayed & distributed for theyr Soules. As
nough to bring thē out of purgatory, they
thrust thē out of their beedrolles and toke
dayly mo and mo.

But ever sene they toke dispensations
of the pope both for their rules and to deuise
de all among them, they recrued in the name
me, not of the poore, but of purgatory, to
quench the ragige fyre ther of, which is as
hote as theyr belyes can sayne it, and so leue
be out of theyr wyts to beleue it: promys
ge a masse daily for .xl. shyllyngs by the yea
re / of whiche foundations when they haue
gotten the moneie, they wil yet with an vnion
purchased of the pope, make but one chaū
trie. ffor if they shuld do all that they haue

Union.

of prelates:

promised from the first founder vnto this
day. v. hundredth monkes were not ynough
in many cloysters.

Thynkest thou þ me were euer so mad
to make the fassions that are now among
them: to geue the sellrar such a sōine, & þ
pziour and the suppiour and the other of
spicers so much for their partes as they ha-
ue perelpe, and to re emptye the Abbot from
his byethē & to send him out of the abbate
into suche parkes & places of pleasure, & to
geue hym a thousand, syftene hundred, two
thousand or. iij thousand polinde perely to
spozte hi selfe with all: Nay, but when tho
row hypochrysie thei had gotte lād ynough
then they turned vnto the pope & toke dys-
pensacions both for their rules whych we-
re to harde for such aboundaūce, and for þ
wylles of their foundere, and serued a great
sort of founders vnder one per dominum,
& deuyded among fewe that whych was
ynough for a great multitude.

It was the pope that deuised all these
fassions to corrupt the prelates with abū-
dauce of worldely pleasures, of whych he
he wist that þ worst wold be most greedy
and for which he wist also þ he shuld fynd
Iudasys ynow that wold forsake Chyrst

¶ ii

and

The practise

and betraye the truth, and be s'woorne false
vnto him and hys godhead. He maketh of
many chauntries one, of an abbay, a cathed-
r'al church, and out of the abbays plucketh
he the Bysshoppykes. And as Bysshoppes
paye for theyr bulles, euen so do an infiny-
te numbꝛe of abbots in chꝛystendom, in all
landes some, whych Abbot is by Bysshops
within them selues and immediatly vnder
the pope. And other abbots & prioures seē
after the same ensample dayly vnto rome
to purchesse lycence, to weare a mitre and a
croffe & gaye oznamētcs, to be as gloriouse
as the best. &c. And where befoze God, no
mā is a priest, but he þ is appointed to pre-
che Chꝛy'stes gospell vnto the people, & the
people ought not to geue ought vnto þ spi-
ritualtye, but for the maintenauce of the
preaching of Gods word, the Pope taketh
vi.oz. vii. yea ten. xx. and as many benefi-
ces as he lysteth, & geueth them vnto one þ
preacheth not at all as he doth all other dy-
gnities of the spiritualtye: he that wyll pur-
chasse and paye / and be s'woorne, shall haue
what he wyll.

Howe they proue all theyr generall
counseils.

of p̄lates.

When the Byschoppes and Abbottes
and other greate P̄lates had for-
saken Chyste and hys lyvinge, and
were fallen downe befoze the beast the vy-
car of Sathan, to receaue their kyngdome
of hym/then the pope called together diuer-
se counsels of such holy apostles, and there
concluded and made of euery opinion that
semed proffitable an axiome of p̄fayth. If
thou aske wher is the scriptur to proue it?
They answered we be the church & can not erre, and therfoze saye they, what we con-
clude, though there be no scripture to pro-
ue it/it is as true as the scriptur & of egall
auctoritie with the scripture and must be
belueued as well as the scriptur vnder pay-
ne of dampnation. For (say they) our truth
dependeth not of the truth of the scriptur
that is, we be not true in our doynge becau-
se the Scripture testifeth vnto vs that
we do truly; but contrary, the truth of the
scripture (saye they) dependeth of vs, that
is, the scripture is true because that we ad-
myt it and tell the that it is true. For howe
couldst thou knowe that it were the scryp-
ture except we told p̄ so? & therfoze we ne-
ede no witnesse of the scripture for that we
do, it is ynough that we so say of our owne

The practise

head for we can not erre

**Curialitu-
de.**

Which reason is lyke as though yong
monkes newly professed, shuld com by the
rules of their order & ordinaunces of their
olde founders and wolde go about to kepe
them: & the old cankered mōkes shuld call
them b acke vnto the corrupt and false ma-
ner that now is vsed, sayig: ye er. Do on-
ly as we teach you/for your profession is
to obey your Elders. According vnto the
rules of our order and ordinaunces of our
founder shal they say: We can teache you
none other, shall the old monkes say: no: ca-
ly vnto you, ye ought therfore to beleue vs
and to do as we byd you. The yong mon-
kes shall ans were, we se that you ly, cleane
cōtrary vnto all that is writē in our rules
and ordinaunces. The old mōkes shal say
ye can not vnderstande them except we ex-
pounde them vnto you/ nother yet knowe
they be your rules/excepte that ye beleue: &
we can not lye vnto you. ffor how can ye
knowe that these be your rules and ordi-
naunces/ but as we your elders tell you so:
Now whē we tell you that these be your
rules and ordinaunces howe can ye be sure
vndoutedlye that it is so/ excepte ye beleue
vndoutedlye that we can not lye: Altherfore

of prelates

ye if ye wylbe sure þ they be your rules & ordinaunces: then ye must first beleue that we can not lye. Leue such imaginations & disputations therfore and laye your rules and ordinaunces out of youre hādes and looke no moze on thē, for they make you erre. And come and do as we tell you/and captiuate youre wyttes and beleue that we can not lye vnto you, and that ye cannot vnderstande your rules and ordynaunces. Euen so yf thou saye it is contrarie to the scripture: they as were þ thou vnderstandeste it not/and that thou must captiue thy wytte and beleue that though it seame neuer so contrary, yet it is not contrarie: no if they determe þ christ is not risen agayn & though þ scripture testify þ he is risen againe/ yet (say they) they be not contrary, if they be wisely vnderstande. Thou must beleue/ say they, þ there is some other meaning in the scripture & þ no mā vnderstandeth it: but þ we say / whether wout scripture or against it/that must thou beleue that it is true.

And thus because þ the scripture wolde not agre with them/they thrust it out of þ way first, & shut vp the kingdome of heauen which is Christs gospel, with false expocicyons and with such sophistry & with

¶ iiii false

The practise

the abottes
kepe þ mo
kes in igno
raunce, & þ
bishops þ
priestes

false principles of naturall wisdom. And the abottes toke the scripture fro their monkes lest some shuld ever barke against þ abottes lyuyng, and set vp suche longe serupce and syngyng to werpe them wpyth all that they shulde haue no leasure to rede in the scripture but with their lippes, and made them good chere to fylle their bellies and to stop the pꝛ mouths. And the byshops in lyke maner to occupy their pꝛiests with all, that they shulde not study the scripture for barkyng agaynst them, sett vp longe Serupse wonderous intricate, so that in xij. y. ares thou coudest scarce learne to turne a ryght vnto it: Long matēses, long Euentonges, longe Masses, long Wyryges with vauntage yet to mitigate the tediousnes, quia leuis est laboz cum lucro, for lūtre (say they) maketh the laboure lyght: euer noselyng them in Ceremonies and in their oune cōstitutions, decrees, ordinaūtes and lawes of holy church.

And the promises and testament which the sacrament of Chrystes body and bloud did preach daylye vnto þ people, that they put out of knowlege and say now that it is a sacryfice for the soules of purgatorie, þ they myght the better sell their masse. And

of prelates.

in the vniuersytes they haue ordered that the cast of
no man shall loke on the scripture vntyl he the vniuers
be nourse in heathen learning. viij. or nyne cities.
pere and armed with false principles, with
which he is clene shyt out of the vnderston
ding of the scripture. And at his fyrst com
ing vnto the vniuersitie, he is sware that
he shall not defame the vniuersitie what
soeuer he seeth. And when he taketh fyrste
degree, he is sware that he shall hold none
opinion condemned by the church, but what
such opinions be, he shall not know. And
they when they be admitted to studie di
uinitie, because the scripture is locked vp
with such false expositions and wyth false
principles of naturall philosophie that they
cannot enter in, they go aboute the out syde
and dispute all their lyues aboute wordes
and vayne opinions pertaynyng as
muche vnto the healyng of a mannes heale
as helth of his soule. Provided yet alway, **Provido**
lest god geue his singular grace vnto any
parson, that none may preach except he be
admitted of the bisshopes. The ca **Tho**
mas de aquino & he made the pope a god
with his sophistry, & the pope made him
a saynt for his labour, and called him doc
tor sanctus, for whose holynes no man
maye

Saint tho
mas de
Aquino.

The practise

Saintes.

**Thomas
of caunter
bury.**

may deny what soeuer he sayth saue i cer-
tayne places where amōg so many lyres he
sayd now and then trur. And in like maner
who so euer defendeth his tradicions, de-
crees and priuileges, him he made a saint
also for hys labour, were hys luyng ne-
uer so cōtrary vnto the scripture, as Tho-
mas of Canterbury with many other like
whose life was like Thomas cardinales
but not Christs neyther is Thomas car-
dinales life any thing saue cōtrefaytn-
ge of saint Thomas of canterbury. Tho-
mas becket was first sene in marchaūtil
tempozall, and then to learn spirituall mar-
chaundyse, he gatt him to Theobald Arch-
bisshop of Canterburpe which sent him di-
uerse tymes to Rome about busines of ho-
ly church. And when Theobald had spied
his actiuitie, he shooe hi deaco lest he shuld
go backe, & made him Archdeacon of Can-
terbury & vpon y, presented him to the kin-
ge. And the king made him his chaūcelar
in which office he passed the pompe & pry-
de of Thomas cardinall as farre as the o-
nes shyne passeth the others tombe in glo-
ry & ryches. And after that, he was a mā
of warre, & captayn ouer .v. or .vi. thousā
men in full harnesse as bryght as saict Be-

of prelates.

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The practise

the lynes of þ verry saintes wyth starke lynes / to moue men to offere / which thyng they call deuocion.

And though in all their doinges they oppress the tēporalty & their comē wealth, & be greuous vnto þ rygh, and payntfull to þ pooze: yet they be so many & so exercised in wyles & so subtil & so knit & sworne together þ they cōpasse þ tēporalty & make the bearethē whether they wil or wyll not as the euē doth the oke partly with iugglinge, & besyde that with wordly polycy. For every abbot wyll make him þ may do most in the shyre or wyth the kynge / the stuarde of hys landes & geue hym a fee yerely, and wyll lēd vnto some, & feast other, þ by such meanes they do what they wyll. And lytle master parson after the same maner, if he come into an house & the wife be snoutefaire he wil rote him self there by one craft or other: ether by vsing such pastime as þ good man doth / or in beinge benefycyall by one waye or other, or he wyll lend hym / and so bryng hym into hys daunger, that he can not thurst hym oute when he wolde, but must be cōpelled to beare him and to let hym be homely whether he wyll or not.

of prelates.

TAn ensample of practyse out of
oure owne chronycles.

Take an ensample of their practyse out of our owne stories. King Herold tolde. exiled or banished Robert Archbischope of Canterbury. For what cause the English polychronicon specifieth not. But Robert of it the cause weare not sumwhat suspect, I canterbury. thynke they wolde not haue passed it ouer with scyence. Thys Robert gat himme diately vnto kynge William the conquerour then duke of Normandye. And the pope Alexander sente duke William a baner to go and conquere England and clea- Remission
re remission vnto whosoever wold folow of fines to
the baner and goo wyth kynge William. conquere
here marke how streight the pope folowed- englande.
Christes steppes and his apostles: they preac-
hed forgeuens of synnes, to all that re-
pented thow Christes bloude shedyng: the
pope preacheth forgeuenesse of synnes to
all that will slea their bretheren bought w
Christes bloud: to subdue them vnto hys
tyrannie. What so euer othere cause duke Wil-
liam had against kynge Herold, thou maiest
be sure that þe pope wolde not haue medled
if Herold had not troubled hys kingdom

The p[re]tise

me: neyther shuld duke william haue bene able to conquer the land at that tyme except the spyritualtie had wroughte on hys syde. What bloud did that conquest cost England / thow we whych almoost all the lordes of the Englysh bloude were slayne, & the Normandes became rulers / and all the lawes were chaunged into frenche. But what careth y^e holy fether for sheding of laye mens bloude? It were bitter that .x. hundred thousand laye knaves loste theyr liues, then that holy church shuld lose one ynch of her honour, or saint Peters seate one iote of her ryght.

Anselmus

And Anselmus that was byshoppe in shorte time after, neuer left stryvinge with that myghtie prince kynge William the second / vntyll he had compelled hym maugre hys teth, to deliuer vp the inu[en]tione or election of byshops vnto saint Peters bys care / whych inu[en]tione was of old tyme y^e kynges dute.

And agayne, when the sayde kynge William wolde haue had the tribut that p[re]lates gaue yea[rly]e vnto their byshops for theyr whores paye to hi, dyd not Raffe byshop of Chichester forbyd goddes seruice (as they call it) and stoppe vp the church

of prelates.

dozes with thornes thozow out al hys tles
rese, vncyll the kynge had yelded hym vpper
hys trybute agayne: ffor when the holy fa
ther had forbidden pꝛeestes theyꝝ wyues,
the bysshop permitted the wyues of their
owne for a yearly tribute, & do yet in all la
des, saue in England where they maye not
haue any other saue menues & wyues onely.

And agayne for the election of **S**teuen
langton archbysshop of Canterbury, what
miserye and wretchednesse was in the roy
alme a longe ceason: The was the land in
terdited many yeaeres. And when that hol
pe not, then Irelande rebelled agaynst kin
ge John immediatly, and not wythout þ
secrete workinge of oure Prelates I dare
well saye. But synally when neyther the
interditing nether þ secrete subtiltie helpe,
& whē John wold in no meanes consent þ
saint peters vicar shuld raygne alone ouer
the spiritualtye, & ouer all þ perteyned vnto
the, and þ they shulde synne & do all mis
chefe vnpunished: the pope sent remission
of synnes to the kynge of Fraunce for to go
and conquere hys land. Whereof king John
was so sore afrayd þ he yelded vp his crow
ne vnto þ pope, & sware to hold þ land of hi
ad þ his successors shuld do so lykewyse.

Not.

La.
of synnes
to conquer

And

The practyse

**Thomas
Arundell.**

And agayn in kynge Richardes dayes
p'second / Thomas Arundell archbysshop
of Cāterbury & chaūcelare was exyled to
p' Carle of Darbye. The outwarde pretē
ce of the varyaunce betwene the kynge ad
his lordes was for the deluyeraunce of the
towne of Baste in Bytayne. But our pre
lates had an other secret mystery a bryng
They coulde not at theyre owne luste slea
the pooze wretches which at that tyme we
re conuerted vnto repentaunce / and to the
true faith / to put their trust in chrysts death
& bloudsheddyng for the remission of their
synnes by the preachinge of Iohan Wycliffe.
Practyse. As sone as the archbysshop was out of
the royaume, the Irishmen began to rebelt
agaynst kynge Rychard as befoze agaynst
kynge Ihon: But not hardely withoute
the inuisyble inspyzation of them that rule
bothe in the courte and also in the consciences
of al men. They be one kingdom swoz
ne together one to helpe an other scatered
abzoade in all royalmes.

And howe beit that they stryue amonge
them selues who shalbe greatest, yet agaynst
the temporall powe they be alwayes at one
though they dissēble it and fayne as thogh
one helde agaynst the other to know theyx

of prelates.

enemies secretes to betray them with all. The p^rca inspyre priuelye into p^r brestes of p^r people, what myschefe they lyst, & no mā shal know whēce it cometh. Their letters go secretly frō one to an other thozow out all kyngdōs. Saict peters vicar, shal haue woꝛde in .xv. or .xvi. dayes, frō the vttermost part of chꝛistendom. The bysshops of England at their nede: cā wyte vnto p^r bysshops of Ireland, Scotland, denmarke, Douchland, fraunce and spayne, promysig them as good a turne an other tyme, puttyng them in remembꝛaunce that they be all one holy churche: & p^r the cause of the one, is the cause of the other, sayenge: if our tugglyng breake out, yours can not be longe hyd. And the other shal serue their turne, ad bꝛing the game vnto their handes, & no man shal know how it cometh about. As lone as kyng Richard was gone to Ireland to subdue these rebellous, the bysshoppe cam in agayn, and pꝛeuented the kyng, and toke vp his power against him and toke him prisoner, and put him downe, ad to death most cruelly, and crowned the rascall of darby hig. O mercyfull Chꝛist, what bloud hath that coꝛonacion cost England? But what care they? Their causes muste

The practise

be auenged. He is not worthy to be knyght
that wyl not auenge their quarrels. For be
not the knynges recreaue their kyngdome of
the beast, and I weare to worship hym and
mainteine hys throne. And then when the
erle of Darbye which is knyng Henry the
fourth, was crowned, the prelates take hys
sword and hys sonnes Henry the fifth af
ter hym, as all þe kinges swordes syns and
abused them to shed chryste bloude at their
pleasur. And they coupled their cause vnto
the knynges cause (as now) & made it treasoure
to beleue in Chryst as þe scriptur teacheth &
to resyst the bisshopes (as now) and thurte
the in the knynges pylours (as now) so that
it is no new inuencion, that they now do but
euen an old practyse, though they haue done
their busy cure to hyde theyr science, & their
conspiraunce shuld not be espyed.

Duke of
Gloucester.

And in knyng henrye the. vi. dayes, how
raged they as fierce lions agaiſt good duke
Humfrey of Gloucester the knynges vncle, and
protector of the realme in the kings yow
th and childehod, because that for him they
myght not slea whom they wold, and make
what cheyrsaunce they lusted. Wold not þe
bisshop of Wynchester haue fallen vppon
him and oppressed hym openly with myght

of pzelates;

and power, in the Cite of London, had not the citizens come to hys helpe?

But at the last they found the meanes to contriue a dyft to byng their matters to passe, and made a parliament farre from the citizens of London, where was slayne the good duke and only welth of the royals me, and the myghty shylde that so longe before had kept it from sorow, which shortly after his death, fell the ron by heapes. But p cronicles can not tell wherfore he dyed, nor by what meanes. No meruell verely. For he had neede of other eyes then such as the world seeth with all that shud spe out the secret priuie pathes. Fewertheless the cronicles testifie that he was a vertuous man, a godly and good to the comen welth.

Whoeuer the Protectour of Purgatorie sayth in hys Dialogue quod I, ad quod her and quod youte frende, how that he was a noble man and a great clerke, and so wyse that he coulde spee false myracles and dysclose them, and Judge them from the true, whych is an hateful science vnto our spryualte and moare abhorred then necromancie or wythcraft and a thyng wherfore a man by their lawe, I dare well saye, is worthy to dye: and that secretly yf it be

The practise

possible. Now to be good to the comen welth/ and to se false miracles, and thirde to with stande that ffrance then brought vnder the fete of the Englyshmen, shuld not be set vp agayn, by whose power the pope holdeth doune þe Emperour & reygneeth in his stead, becauses why he myght dye though by what meanes be not known.

three causes hurtefull to the spiritualtye, seing the one is the others praye as the lambe is the wolues. Secondaryly if a man be so cleare espyed that he can spye false myzacles howe can iugglers gette theyr lyuinge and be in prynces where such a fellow is? Thyrde to kepe doune þe kyngdome of fraunce, is to pul. S. Peters bicar out of his seate.

Now if the great haude þe whorpe of babilon were destroyed, then wold the bozdel and stues of our prelates shortly perishe. If Abaddon that destroyer king of þe grasshoppers which deuoure all that is greene, were destroyed, then were the kingdomes of our caterpillers at an ende.

By what craft the pope kepeth the Emperour doune.

Marke

Marke an other practise of our most holy prelates. When the empyre was translated vnto the germanes / though the emperour was fallen doune, and had kyssed the Popes fete, and was become his swozne seruaunt: yet there was much strife and open warre oftentimes betwene the popes and the emperours. And the popes haue put doune many good Emperours / by helpe of the Bishopes, who euer where secretly perswaded þe lordes, to forsake the emperours: & to take dispensacion of the pope for their othes.

And contrary wyse, the emperours haue now and then deposed dyuerse popes at request of the Cardinales & other great prelates, by whose helpe onely they were able to do it. For els verely though al Kynges christened / had swozne to depose one Pope out of his seat, if they had not þe fauour of other prelates thereto, they might haply by the secret practise of them, to be put out of their own seates in þe meane tyme.

The pope therfore, to be sure of him self & out of þe feare & daunger of þe emperour, were he neuer so mighty, & that þe emperour shuld not see his daply open paitimes, made

The practice

friendship and amitye with the Venecians
on the one syde of him, and let them com in
to certayne cyties of the Emperours in I
taly and with the ffrenchking on the other
syde, and late him also up into certayne Cy
ties and possessyons of the Emperours:
and he him selfe in the middes: And shotte
out the Emperoure fro cōmunge any mo
re to Rome, and euer sent him his coronat

No mā re
buky pope

tion home to hym. And then he made a law
we that no man shuld rebuke the Pope for
what so euer myschete he dyd, sayeng, that
the Pope was aboue al and iudge ouer all,
and none ouer him, and therfore forbade in
his law. *Distinctio .xl. Si Papa.* sayenge:
though the pope be proued negligent abou
te him selfe, and also the soule helth of his bre
thern, and slacke in his worke and speech
lesse as concernyng anye good, and drawe
with him by his ensample innumerable peo
ple to hell to be punished with him with di
uerse tormētes euerlastingly: yet se that no
mortal mā presume once to rebuke his fau
tes here. For he shall iudge all men and no
man him. *Dantichrest.* Is he not atichrest
that wyll not haue his lyfe tryed by Gods
worde?

Venecians.

If the Venecians catch any of our holy
fathers

Of prelates

fathers to bones or possessions whether by
marre or that they haue bought it, or that
it be layde to mortgage vnto them or that
the olde Pope hath geuen it with the marriage
of som daughter vnto the duke of Venyce:
then the holy father that succeedeth, whē he
seeth his season, sendeth for it agayne, sayen-
ge that it is not lafull for lay men to with-
holde saint Peters patrimony. If they al-
lege that they bought it and so forth: his fa-
therhood answereth that the olde Pope had
none auctoritie to make any such cheuilaun-
ce with saint Peters inheritance: he cou-
de haue but the vse of it his lyfe longe: and
after it must nedes returne vnto his succes-
sour agayne. And vpon that he interdicteth
them and curseth them as blacke as cole:
and downe to the pyt of hell.

But the Venetians knowing more of
oure holys fathers practyse, for their nype-
nes then we which dwell a farre off: and wy-
ser then we of cold contryes perceauing al-
so that their colour chaūgeth not with his
curlyng, and that they syncke not, and that
their meate digesteth as well as before: and
that (as Erasmus sayeth) they smyle as be-
fore (with reuerence of the holy co-
urle I speake it) & therefore feare not his ut-

¶ In the

The practise

excommunication nor excommunicatyon.

Then our holy father raiseth vp all his power that he is able to make in Italy, as gaynst them: & sendeth for the 3 wytizers to come and helpe. If he be not yet strong ynough, then he sendeth vnto the bysshops of fraunce, warning them that if hys seate decaye, theye can not longe prosper, and therto is that they put theye kyng in remembrance how that he is called most chrysten kyng and that they despyze hym to do somewhat for hys tyle against this disobedient rebellious, vnto the most holy se of Rome our mother holy churche.

Frenchmen

If an other tyme the frenchmen come to nye our holy father, as they be euer gaping for Italy, to byrge the empyre home agayne to fraunce. Then the moost holy vicare byrgeth his whole power agaynst them with the power of the venetians, and with hys old frendes the 3 wytizers. If he be

Englyshme

not yet stronge ynough, then he sendeth to the bisshops of England, to help their god, and to moue their kyng to do somewhat for holy churche, puttyng him in remembrance of whom he holdeth his croune & of hys othe, and how many cappes of mayntenance haue bene euer sent vnto hys forefathers

of prelates

thers, and what honour it was vnto them,
and that he maye easely gett as greate ho-
noure as they, and happily a moze excellent
title, yf he wyl take our holy fathers parte,
besydes that he shall purchase remysyon
of all hys synnes.

Then must the peace and all the apoin-
tements made betwene vs and fraunce, be
broken, and the kynge must take a dyspen-
sacion for hys oth. ffor the kynge of fraunce
wyl attempte nothing in Italy, vntill he
haue sent hys ambassadours, and haue ma-
de a perpetuall peace wyth our kynge, the
Sacrament of the bodye of our sauour
broke betwene them, to confyrme the ap-
pointement. But I suppose that the brea-
king signyfeth that the appointmēt shall
not long endure, for a greate deale of flo-
wer wolde not make so manye hoostes, as
they call them, or synginge loues, as hath
bene broken in our dayes betwene christen
princes (as they wyl be called) to confirme
promises that haue not long bene kept. ¶
The vse of that blessed sacrament wyl the
princes none know: but christ ordeined it to
be a perpetuall memoꝛye of his bodye was
broke for oure synnes vpon the crosse, & for all
that repent shuld receaue as oft as they ea-

The abuse
of the sacra-
ment.

The practice

ke of it/for geuenes of their misdeades thorow faith. Of þe kings of þe earth whē they bryake that sacramēt betwene them, do say on this wyse: The body of our sauious (which was broken on þe crosse for the synne of al þe repēt & haue good harts & wold faine kepe his law) be broke vnto my dānacion, if I bryake this oth: thē is it a terrible oth, and they had neede to take heede how they make it, ad if it be lawfully made, not to bryake it at all. But as they care for the pꝛothe: whiche they make in wedlocke: so they care for this.

What soeuer need the pope hath, he wyl not send to the Emperour to come & helpe him in Italy, for feare lest he wold take to hi self what soeuer he cōquered of þe frēch men: and waxe to strong and minish oure holy fathers power, and become our holy fathers vicar: as he is saint Peters. Nevertheless if we englishmen will hyze the Emperour to com and fyght against fraunce for the right of the church in these quarters that be next vnto vs, his fatherhood is cōtent to admyt his seruice.

When our king hath graunted to take our holy fathers part: then the pretence & cloke our ward must be, that the kyng wil

of prelates.

challenge his ryghte in fraunce. And to ayde
the king in his ryght, must the commons be
mylked tyll they blede agayne. Then to do
the king seruice, the lordes sell oz laye their
landes to morgage. The n is cleane remis-
sion geuen to sleo french dogges. He that Remission
dyeth in the quarell shall neuer see purgato of synnes.
purgatory but fflye to heauen streyght, even with
a thought.

When the Pope hath what he desyreth
in Italye, then muste we make
peace wth the frenchmen agayne
immediatlye, that fraunce be not all toge-
ther trode vnder the fete: but that it remaine
alwaye in a meane state / stronge ynough
to match the emperour & to kepe hym dou-
ne, but not to myghtye for oppressinge the
pope, and then oure prelates to bzyng the
peace about / sende immediatly a fryer for
rest / oz a vicar of croiden / to preach before
king & his lordes / which preacher roseth an
expressh vnto the as though he halowed hym
houndes and maketh exclamations, sayen-
ge: Alas what wyll ye do: spare Chyristen
bloude: wyll ye slea youre owne soules: Be
not the frenchme as well chyriste as ye: Mo-
reouer ye slea poore innocents that neuer of-
fended make peace for p passio of chyist, kyll

not

The practife

not one an other as though Christ had not dyed for you: but fyght rather agaynst the turkes.

Thē come in the Ambassadors of fraunce, and money a fewe pzelates and certayne other the kynges playfellows, & be swoyn with them to betraye both the kinge and & royalme too: And then is peace concluded. But outwardelye there is nothinge saue a truce taken for halfe a yere, tyll our souldiers be at home again, for feare least they wold not be contēt. Then cometh the whole host home beggerd both great and small And the pooze that can not sodenlye gette work, fall to stealynge and be hanged at home. Thys could More tell in hys Utopia before he was the cardenalles swoyn secretarie, and fallen at hys fete to betraye the truth, for to gett promocyon.

Henry 8. v.

Take an ensample: the byshops sent king Henrye the fyft out to conquere ffraunce. The cause was (sayth the chronicles) that the kyng went about to take theyr temporallies from them. And therfore to brynge the kyng into an other imaginacyon, they monyed hym, and sent him into ffraunce.

When they had sent out the kyng, he conquered more then was theyr will and more

of pꝛelates.

re then they supposed possible for hym in
so shorthe space and bzought fraunce cleane
vnder fete: so that oure pꝛelates had much
secrete bulynes, to set it vp agayn, but what
is impossyble vnto so great Gods?

In kynge Henryes dayes the .vi. oure
holy father of Rome made the byshop of **Wēry p. bi**
Wynchester a cardynall, which went shor-
ly after into fraunce to treate of a truce be-
twene England & fraunce. And him mete
te a lrgate of Rome, a cardinall also: after
which meating, Englyshmen had euer the
woꝛse in fraunce, and theyꝛ chefest frende
the duke of Burgayne forsoke them. ffor
whē cardinales & byshops mete together,
they haue their secrete counsell by them sel-
ues, wherin they conclude neyther what is
good for Englande, noꝛ yet for fraunce, but
what is best for our holy fathers pꝛoffyte
to kepe him in hys state.

When kynge Henry was of age, there
was a maryage made betwene hym and
earle of Arminackes doughter in Gīā, w
the which shuld haue bene geuen manye ca-
stels and townes in Gīā and a greate sō-
me of money therto. But p̄ maryage was
bꝛoken not without the secret woꝛkyng of
oure pꝛelates and dyspensacion of our hos-

The p^ractise

the father thou mayest be sure. And a marriage was made betwene hym and the kinges daughter of Cecyle, for which England gaue vp the whole dukedom of Guyan and Carledom of Mayne / wherby we lost all Normandye, wherof they were the kape. And besyde þ, the communes gaue a, x. & an half to sette her in wyth pompe. And then was the good duke of Gloucestre traitorously murthured / partly because he could iudge false myzacles, & partly because of the delpyeraunce of these two contrrys. For he being a lyue, they durst not do it.

And when kyng Edward had put doune kyng Henry, a marriage was made and concluded betwene hym & the kyng of spaine this quenes mother þ now is. But per the Ambassadors were come home, oure Prelates had bewitched kyng Edward by theyr apostle ffeper bongay / and married him vnto a wyddowe that was a knyghtes wyfe / lest yf spayne and England had bene ioyned together / kyng Edward shuld haue recouered fraunce agayn. But what followed after þ breakig of þ marriage, betwene kyng Edward & the earle of warwick and what came of his chyldren: þe and what came on king Henry of windsores chyldren
also

of prelates.

also: But what care our prelates what vs
graunce or mischefe falle on princes or on
theyr copaimers / so theyr kyngdome prosper
re:

In kynge Henryes dayes the. vii. the
cardinal Hurton a byshop for of win-
chester, deliuered vnto the kinges grace the
confessions of as many lordes as hys gra-
ce lusted. Alho soeuer was mistrusted, it he
shoue hym self at the charterhouses. **Confession**
Greenwich / at saint Iohns, or where soe-
uer it was, the confessor was commaunded
by the auctorite of the pope to deliuer his
confession wrytē & sworne that it was al.
And cardinal Hurton had a licence of the
pope for fourtyne, to studye prynces, of
whych he him selfe was one / and other I
haue heard named whiche at thys tyme I
passe ouer with silence. And how the holy
scriers obseruautes caried feyned letters
to trye who was true, I passe ouer with si-
lence also. How be it such temptacions and
fained profers were ynough to moue them
that neuer wold haue thought amysse: yea
and in confession men wyl shewe them sel-
ues of thoughtes which they neuer went a-
bout in the outwarde deade.

Whē any great mā is put to death how

tw

The practise

his chfeffour entreateth him & what penance is eniopned him, concerninge what he shall say, when he cometh vnto the place of executiō. I could gesse at a practise þ might make mens eares glowe

And did not the subtil counsell of the sayde two pzelates fayne the sege of Bolen to make a pzetence to gather in a fastene, whē there was no moze warre betwene þ king of ffraunce and of England, then is betwene a mans head þ hath lust to slepe, & his pillow. Which sege yet cost many a mā theire lyues, yea & some great men therto, which knew not of that faining. The kinges grace went ouer with a ten thousand men to conquere all ffraunce and spent haply an hundred thousand pound, of which he saued þ fourth part in the dānypratres and gathered at home .v. oz. vi. hundred oz moze. And two other such fayned viages could I happily reherse, which I passe ouer for diuerse causes, where many an Englishe man lost his lyfe. But what care they for mens lyues?

And did not our cardinall with like policye thicke ye to gather þ which he thought wolde not well be payed, excepte the commons sawe some cause, by a great multitude

of prelates.

strude of scottes vnto the english pale ether
by some byshopes of Scotlande or by so
me great man, whom he corrupted with so
me perelpe pencion: agaynst which the po
re nozthen mē must goo on their owne cost
to kepe them out. And generall professyon
was commaūded at London / thysle in the
werke, and thoro out all the lande, while
Kynge's treasurers gathered the tare of the
comen people. Which plage and such like af
ter the thretning of god. Leui. xvi. & Deu
te. xxviii. ad. xxix. I am sure wyl faule on
all christendome without cease, vntyll they
ether desye the name of chyst with the ture
kes, or if they wyl be called chysten, they tur
ne and loke on his doctrine.

Pea and what farned the cardinall at
the great loue to begyle his owne pprestes /
to make the swere what they were woorth
and the better wyllyng to paye, for the co
men pprestes be not so obedient vnto the
ordinaries, that they wyl pay money excep
te they know why. Now it is not expedyēt
that euery rascal / shulde know the secretes
of the very true cause, for many cōspideracy
ons. And therefore a othe pretence must be
made ad an other cause alleaged. And ther
for the pprestes were charged by the ordinaries

The practise

of priests to appeare before the gentelmen
of þe court and temporal officers / & sweare
what euery mā was worth. Now the pꝛe
sts had leue to be slayne and dye martirs af
ter the example of saint Thomas of Can
terbury, then to sweare before a lay iudge,
for they thinke it greater synne then to slea
their owne fathers, and that then the lyber
ties of the church were cleane lost, and they
no better then the vyle lay peple. And whē
they were in þe perplexitie that they muste
eyther sweare or runne into the kyngs dan
ger & lose theyꝝ goddes (I wold say theyꝝ
goodes) then my lord cardenall sent downe
hys graciouse powꝛ þe they shuld sweare
vnto theyꝝ ordinaris onely. And then the
pꝛests for ioye that they were ryd out of þe
laye mennes handes, were so glad and ioy
ous, that they wyte not what thanks to
geue my lord cardenall / and so were obedy
ent to sweare and to lende, or els for all the
curses that my lord Cardenall hath and the
Pope to, they wold neither haue swozne or
payde a penny.

The practise of our tyme.

When

When the kynges grace came fyrste Thomas
to the ryghte of the crowne and vnto wolfe.
the Gouvernauce of the Royalline
pōg & vnerpert, Thomas wolfe a man of
lust & courage, and bodelie strength to do ad
to suffer great thinges, and to endure in al
maner of voluptuousnes, expert ai dexter-
cysed in þe court of the world, as he which
had hard, red & sene much policie & had do-
ne many thynges him selfe, and had bene of
the secreete councell of weyghtye maters, as
sotte as symon that betraied troye, utterly
apoynted to semble and dissemble, to haue
one thyng in the harte, and an other in the
mouth, beyng theerto as eloquent as sotte &
able to perswade what he lusted to the that
were vnerpert: so desyrous and greedy of
honoure, that he cared not but for the nexte
and most compendious waye theerto, whe-
ther godlie or vngodlie: this wylfe wolf
sape, ad ragynge sea and shypwrecke of all
England, though he sheweth him selfe plea-
saunt and calme at the fyrst (as hores do vnto
to theyr louers) came vnto þe kynges grace
and wayted vppō him, and was no man so
obsequious and seruicable, and in all ga-
mes and spoyses the fyrst and next at hand

The practise

and as a captayne to courage other and a ga-
ye fynder out of newe pastimes to obteyne
fauour wity all.

And thereto as the secreete communicaci-
on wet, which by many tokens thou mayest
Bishopes well coniecture and gather to be true, he cal-
calke kings ked the kinges nativite and birth, whiche is
nativities. a comon practise amonge prelates, in all lan-
des, wherby he sawe wherunto the kynges
grace shuld be enclined all his lyfe, and what
shuld be lyke to chaunge him at all times.
And as I hard it spoken of diuerse, he ma-
de by craft of necromancie, grauen Ima-
gerie to beate vppon hym, wherwith he be-
witched the kinges mynde, and made the kin-
ge to dote vpon him more then euer he dyd
on any lady or gentyl woman: so that nowe
the kinges grace followed him, as he before
folowed the king. And then what he sayde,
that was wyl dome, what he prayed, that
was honourable onlp. Moreover in the
meantime he spied out the naturs and dispo-
sitions of the kinges playefelows, and of
all that were greute, and whō he spied mea-
se for his purpose, hym he flattered, & hym
he made faythfull wityth great promyses, &
to hym he swore, & of hym he toke an othe
gayne that the one shuld helpe & other for
wityth

of prelates.

Without a secret oth, he admytted no man
vnto any parte of hys prouities.

And euer as he grew in promociōs &
dignitie, so gathered he vnto him of þ most
suble wotted, & of thē that were dronke in
the desyre of honour most lyke vnto hi self
And after they were swozne he promoted
thē, and woth great pmyces, made them in
falshe fasthfull: & of them euer presented
vnto the kyngs grace, & put thē into his ser
uice, saying: thys is a man mite for poure
grace. And by these spyes (if ought were
done or spokē in the court, against þ card
nall) of þ he had woorde within an houre
or two. And thē came the cardinall to court
with all hys magike, to persuaue þ contra
ry. If any in the court had spokē against þ
Cardinall, ad the same not great in the kin
ges fauour, the Cardinall bad hym walke
a villayne, and thrust hym out of the court
headlong. If he were in conceyte woth the
kynges grace, thē he flatterer, & persuaues
and corrupe some to gyftes, and sente some
Ambassadours, and some he made Captai
nes at Calais, Harmes, Brynes, Hermsley &
Bersey, or sent them to Irland & into the
north, and so occupied them till the kyng
had forgottē them and other were in thynz

The kinge
is betrayed

The quene
is betrayed

The practife

robours: or tyll he had spyed what they en-
tended.

And in lyke maner played he with the la-
dyes and gentyll women. Wholoeuer of
them was great, with her, was he familiar
and to her gaue he giffes, Pea: and where
saynt Thomas of caüterburie was wone
forno after, Thomas Cardinall wēt oft
befoze, pzeuentyng hys pñer and pñer
ted the order of the holie man. If any were
subtyll witted and mete for his porpose, he
made he swoyn to betray þ quene like wile
end to tell hym what she sayde or dyd. I
know one that departed the court for none
other Cause then that she wolde no longer
betraye her mastresse.

And after þ same example he furnished
þ court with chapelains of his owne swoyn
ne disciples & childre of hys owne byngig
Up, to be alwaie pzeent ad to dyspute of va-
nityes and to water what soruer the Car-
dinall had planted. If among those cozmo-
raites any yet begā to be so much i fauour
wyth the kynge, and to be somwhat busye
in the Court, and to dyaue any other to aye
then as my lord Cardinall had appoynted
that the Blowe shulde goo, anon he was
sent to Italye or to SPAIN: or some

quaz

of prelates

was picked against him and so was
shut out of the court, as Stokesly was.

He promoted the byshop of Lyncolne
that now is, his most faythful frende & old
companion, and made hym confessor: to
whom, of what sweete þe kynges grace shew
me himself, think ye not that he spake so lou
de that the Cardinall herde it: and not bry
ght: for as Gods creatures ought to o
beie God and serue his honoure, so ought
the popes creatures to obeye the pope & ser
ue his magestie:

the bisshop
of Lincolne

Finally Thomas wolfe became what
he wolde, even porter of heauen, so that no
man coulde entre into promotion, but thro
w him.

The cause of all that we haue
suffred this twentye
yeares.

Aboute the beginning of the kynges
grace that now is, fraunce was migh
tie, so þe I suppose it was not mygh
tier this fyue hundred yeares. Kyng Le
wes of fraunce had wonne Naples, and king lewes
had taken Bonony from laint Peters se.
Wherfore Pope Iuly was wroth ad cast Pope Iuly
his

The practise

how to bring the frenchmen downe, yet so
betly lest whyle he brought hym lower he
shulde geue an occasyon to lyft vp the Em
perour hyer. Our first viage into Spayne
was to bryng þ frenchmen lower. for our
meyney were set in the forefront and boz
ders of spayne towarde Gascayne: partly
to kepe those parties, and partly to feare þ
Gascaynes, & to kepe them at home whyle
in the meane tyme the Spanyarden was
Rauerne. When Rauerne was wone
our men came to howse as manye as dyed
not there, ad brought all there money with
them home agayn/ saue that they spend the
re. Now beit for all the losse of Rauerne þ
frenchmen were yet able ynough to match
Spayne, the Venecians ad the Pope with
all the Zwytyers that he coulde make: so þ
there was yet no remedye but we must set
on þ frenchme also, if they shuld be brought
out of Italy.

the newe
Thomas.

Then pope Iulij wrote vnto hys deare
sonne Thomas wolfe that he wold be as
good/ as lovyng and as helpynge to holys
church/ as any Thomas euer was/ sayng
he was as able. Then the newe Thomas
as glouious as the old/ toke the mater in ha
nd and perswaded the kinges grace. And
then

of prelates

Then the kinges grace toke a dispensacyon
for hys othe made vppon the apoyntment
of peace betwene him and the frenche king
and promysed to helpe the holy seate where
in Pope Peter neuer satte. But the Emper
our Maximilian myght in no wyse stand
still lest the frenchmen shuld money hym, &
get adde of hym: seynge the Almanes re
fuse not money where soeuer it be profered
then quod Thomas wolffe, Wh and lyke
poure grace / what an honoure shulde it be
vnto poure grace if the emperour were pou
re sodayne? So greate honoure neuer cha
unced any kynge christened. It shulde be spo
ken of while the world stode. The glozy &
honour shall hyde and darken the coste that
it shall neuer be sene, though it shulde coste
halfe poure realme. Dixit & factum est, it
was euen so. And the a parliament: and
then paye; and then vpon the frenche dog
ges, with cleane remission of all his synnes,
that slew one of them, or if he be slayne for
the pardons, haue no it right to saue in this
life, but in the lyfe to come only the to hea
uen strayght without feynge of p paynes
of purgatorye.

Maximilian

Remission
of synnes.

Then cam our kynge with all hys mi
ght by sea and by lande, and the Emperour
wyth

The practice

wyth a strong army and the Spanyardes
and the pope & the Venetians all at once a
gainst king Lewis of fraunce. As soon as
the pope had that he despyed in Italy, then
peace immediatlye. And frenchmen were
chrysten men/ and pytie, yea and great synne
ne also were it to sheade their bloud/ and
frenchkinge was the most chrysten kyng as
gayne. And thus was peace concluded and
oure Englishmen or rather shepe came ho
me against winter and lefte theyr fleeces be
hynde them. Wherfore no smal number of
them, whyle they sought them better raps
mente at home, were hanged for theyr laz
boure.

Why the kinges syster was turn
ed vnto fraunce.

When this peace was made,oure hos
lye Cardynalles and Byschoppes
as their olde Gyle is to calke and
caste. xl. A. yea an hundred yeaere before
what is lyke to chaunce vnto theyr kingdo
me) considered how the Emperour y now
is, was moost like to be chosen Emperour
after hys graundfather Maximilian/ for
Harro

of prelates

Maximilian had already obtained of by-
uerle of the **CALCEDONS** that it
shulde so be.

They considered also howe mightye he
shuld be: first, Kyng of Spayn w all that
perteyneth thereto, w was wont to be v. vi.
or. viij. kyngdōs: then Duke of Burgoyne
Earle of fflaunders, of Hollande, Zelander
and Brabant, wth all that pertaineth ther-
to: then Emperour, and hys brother Duke
of Austrych, and hys sister quene of Hun-
grye. Wherfor thought our prelates, if we
take not hede betymes, oure kyngdom is
lyke to be troubled & we to be brought un-
der the fete. For thys mā shalbe so myghty
that he shall w power take out of y french
kynges handes, out of the handes of the Ve-
netians, and fro the Pope also, what so-
uer parteyneth vnto the empyre, and what
soever belongeth vnto hys other kyngdōs
and dominions therto. And then he wll
come to Rome and be crowned there, and so
shall he overlooke our helpe father and see
what he doeth. And then shall the olde here-
tykes rise vp agayne & say that the Pope
is Antichyste, and stirre vp agayne, and
bying to lyght that we haue byd & brought
a slepe wth muche cost, payne and bloude:
My adyng

The practyse

Shedynge moze then thys hundred yere longe.
ge. Considered also that hys aunte is quene
of England, and hys wyfe the king of Eng
lands sister, considered þ old amitie betwene
þ house of burgom, & þ old kinges of england
so þ they coulde neuer do ought i fraunce w
out theyr helpe: & last of all considered þ cour
se of marchantise þ england hath i those par
ties: & also þ naturall hart þ englyshme bear
to frechme. Wherfoze if we shall vse oure
old practyse, and let the french king agaynst
hym: Then he shall lyghtely obtayne the
fauour of the king of England by the mea
nes of hys Aunte and hys wyfe, and ayde
wyth men and money. Wherfoze we must
take hede betimes and breake thys amytie
Whych thinge we maye by thys oure olde
craft/ craftely bringe to passe. Let vs take a
dispensation & breake thys marriage, and
turne the kinges sister vnto þ french king
If the frenche kynge, gette a male of her.
then we shall lyghely make our kyngepro
tectoure of fraunce/ and so shall Englande
and fraunce be coupled together, and as
for the quene of Englande, we shall trye
me her well ynough, and occuppe the kynge
with straunge loue / and kepe her that she
shall beare no rule. And as the goddes has
spes

practyse.

of prelates.

spoken so it came to passe. Our saye young
doughter, was sent vnto the old pocky king
of fraunce, the yere befoze our moztall ene-
mye and a myscreant, worse then a Tur-
ke, and disobedient vnto oure holy father,
and no moze obedient yet then he was co-
pelled to be against his wyll.

The cause of the iourney to Calyce.

In shorte space thereafter Thomas
wolfe, now Cardinall and Legate
a latere and greatly desyrous to be
pope also, thought it exceeding expedient,
for his many secreete purposes to bying our
kyng and the kyng of fraunce that now
is together: both to make a perpetual peace
and amitie betwene them, and that whyle
the two kynges and their lordes dalyed to-
gether the greate cardinales and Bilshop-
pes of both parties, mighte betraye them
both, and the Emperour and all Chrysten
kinges therto.

Then he made a iourney of gentelmen
arrayed all together in sylk, so much as thir
very shewes and lynyngs of theyr houses,
much moze lyke their mothers then me of
to daye: yea I am sure þ many of theyr mo-
thers

The p[re]dict

theres wolde haue bene ashamed of some
and wanton aray: howbeit they went not
to make war but peace for ever and a daye
longer. But to speake of the Pompeuse
apparell of my lord hym selfe and of his
chaplaines, it passeth the .xii. apostles.

I dare sweare that if Peter and Paule had
sene them sodenly and at a blush / they wold
haue bene harder in beleue that they or any
such shuld be theyr successours / then Thos
mas didimus was to beleue y^e Chryst was
rysen agayne from death.

When all was concluded betwene the
kyng of Fraunce and ours, that Thomas
wolfe had deuised, and when the p[re]lates
of both parties had cast theyr penyworthes
agaynst all chaunces and deuyled remedyes
for all mischeues. Then the ryght reue
rend father in God Thomas cardinall and
Legat, wolde go se the young Emperoure
newlye chosen vnto the toun, and haue a
certayne secreete communicacion wyth some
of his p[re]lates also. And gatte him to byd
ges in Flaunders, where he was receaued
with great solempnitie as belongeth vnto
so myghty a pyllar of Chrystes church, and
was saluted at the entering into the toun
of a mery felow which sayd, *salve rex rex*
gl

P[re]lates

of prelates.

dis tui atque regni sui. Haple both kyng of ^{salutacion}
the king and also of his realme. And though
there were neuer so great stryfe betwene
the Emperoure and the French kyng: yet
my lord Cardynall iugled hym fauour of
them both / and fynally brought the Empe-
rour to Calays, vnto the kinges grace, where
re was great tryumphe / and great loue / &
amytie shewed on both parties, in so much
that certayne men maruelling at it, asked
the olde bisshope of Wexham, How it might
be that we were so great with the Empe-
rour so shortly vppon so stronge and cuer-
lastinge a peace made betwene vs and the
Frenchmen, the Emperour and the kyng of
Fraunce being so mortall ennemyes? My
lord answered that it might be wel inough
if he wist al. But there was a certayn secret
sayd he, wherof all men knew not.

A certayne
secret.

Pea verely they haue had secretes this. viij
hundred yeares, which, though all the laye
me haue felt the, yet fewe haue spied them.
Sawe a fewe Iudas'es whiche for lucre haue
bene cōfederate wyth them, to betray their
owne kinges and all other.

Then were we indifferent & stode still.
And the Emperoure and the French kyng
wrestled together. And Ferdinandus the
empe

The practise

De Hane.
Turnay.

Emperours brother wanne Mayne of Frenchmen and the Emperour turnay our greace conqueste whiche yet after so greace coste in Buploynge a Castell, we delpuered vp agayne unto the frenchmen in earnest ad hope of a mariage betwene the dolphine & our pzincesse.

How the Emperour cam thos
row England.



After that the Emperour wolde into Spayne and cam thow row England where he was receaued wth great honour & wth al that pertayneth to loue and ampte. The kings grace lent hym money and prompled hym more. And the Emperour shuld tarpe a certayne yeares & mary our pzincesse: Not that the cardinallinteded that thou mayest be sure, for it was not proffitable for theyr kingdom, but his mind was to dallie wth the Emperour and to kepe him without a wyfe that (in so much as he was yong and lusty) he might haue bene noselled and entangled wth hoers (which is their nurte further ig. rig. of kinges) and made so effeminate and of kynges. beasty

of prelates.

that he shuld neuer haue bene able to lift vp
his harte to any goodnesse or vertue: that
cardinalles and bysshopes myght haue ad
ministrated his dominions in the meane time
vnto our holy fathers p[ro]fyte.

The king of fraunce hearing the fa
uour that was shewed vnto the Emperou
re, sent immediatlye a diffiaunce vnto oure
king, not wout our cardinalles & bisshops
counsell, thou mayst well wot.

For frenchmen are not so folish to haue do
ne it so vnadvisedlye and so rashlye, scynge
they had to many in their toppes alreadye.
Then oure king spake manye greete woꝝ
des that he wold dꝛyue the frenchkyng out
of his realme, or els the frenchkyng shulde
dꝛyue him out of his. But had he added as
the legate Dandulph taught kunge Jhon
with the popes lycence, his woꝝdes had so
unded much better. For thete can no woꝝ
stande in effect, except the holy fathet con
firme it.

He sent out our soldiers, two comyners
agaist the frenchme, vnto whose chiefe cap
taines the Cardinall had appoynted, how
farre they shuld go, and what they shuld do.
And thetfoꝛe the frenchkyng was nothing
astayed, but bylight all hys Dowet and

gaind

The practife

gaynst the Emperour in other places. And so was the Emperour euer betrayed. And thus the cardinall was y^e emperours frend openly, and the frenchkinges secretlie, ffor at the meeting wth the frenchkinge besyde Calys, he utterly betrayed the Emperour: yet ffor no loue that he had to ffrance, but to helpe the Pope, yea ad to haue bene Pope happely, and to saue they^e kyngdome. Whych treason, though all the world smels led it, yet it brake not out openlie to the eyes tyll the luge of Daupe. And the Cardynall lent the emperoure muche monye openly, and gaue the ffrenchkyng moze secretely. He played with both handes to serue their secret, that all mē know not, as the bishop of Beram sayed. But what soeuer the frenchmen did, they had euer the woze, not withstondyng the secreete wozyng of our hol^y prelates on their syde.

Daupe.

fynallye vnto the lege of Daupe came the ffrenchkyng parsonallye with .lx. thousand men of warre, of whych .xii. thousand were horsemen, and wth money ynough. And the Emperours host was vnder .xx. thousand, of whych were but .iiij. thousand horsemen, wth no money at all. ffor he trusted vnto the Pope ffor ayde of men, and vnto
ours

of prelates.

our Cardynall for money. But the Pope
kepte backe hys men tyll that the frenche
had geuen them a feld, and our Cardinall
kepte backe hys money for the same purpo
se. And thus was the selfe Emperoure be
trayed, as all hys predecessours haue bene
this. viii. hundred yeres. How be it there be
that saie, how that the Emperours sodiers
so thretened Dace, the kynges graces em
bassadoure, that he was fayne to make che
uesaunce wyth marchauntes for money in
the kinges name, to paye the soldyars with
all. Wherfore the cardinall toke from hym
all his promotions, and played tozmetours
wyth him whē he came home, because that
he presumed to do one Note more thē was
in his commissiō But how so euer it was,
p̄ emperours mē, in tarieng for helpe had
spent out all their vitayles. Wherupō Bur
bon the chiefe captayne of the Emperoure
sayd vnto his vnder captaynes: ye se, helpe
cometh not, and that our vitayles are spent.
Wherfore there is no remedy but to fight
though we be vnequally matched. If we
wynne, we shall fynd meate ynough: if we
loose, we shall loose no more then we must
lose with hūgre / though we fyght not. And
so they cōcluded to set bpō p̄ frenche by

Dace:

Burbon

A ii nyght

The practife

night, The king of fraunce and his lordes purposing that the more wolde sooner haue faullen out of the kye, then that the Emperours host durst haue fought wyth them, were som what negligent, and wēt the same night a mummynge that Burbon sett vpon them. The Emperours host therfore with their sodayn comynge vppon the, amazed the frenchmen, and draue them vpon heapes to gether one on an other, so þ they neuer coulde com in aray agayne, and toke the king and diuerse of his lordes & slew many and wanne the felde. And there came out all the Cardinals pzeuue treason, for in the frenchkings tent (say men) were letters founde, and besyde that in the frenchkings treasure, and in all the host among the sodars were englysh shippes found innumerable whiche had come saylunge a thousande myles by land. But what wonder, shippes be made to sayle ouer the sea, and winges to fle into farre contrées & to mount so þ tope of hye hylles.

When the frenchking was taken, we sang Te deum. But for all that singynge we made peace with frenchmen. And the Pope, the Venetians, fraunce and England were knyt to gether, lest the Emperours

of prelates

your army shuld do any hurt in fraunce
Wherby ye may colection of what mind þ
pope & þ cardinal were toward þ emperour,
and to what hart our spiritualty to theyr
inuisible secretes, sang Te deu. And fro þ
time hitherto þ emperour ad our cardinall
haue bene twayne.

After that, when the king of fraunce
was deliuered home agayne / and hys sons
nes left in pledge, many wayes were sought
to bring home the sonnes also ; But in vayne
except þ french king wold make good þ
which he had promysed the Emperour.
For the bringing home of these Chylderne
no man more busyed his wittes / then the
Cardinall. He wold in any wyse the empe
rour shuld haue let the home / & it had bene
but for our kynges pleasure, for the greates
kindenesse that he shewed him i times past.
He wold haue maryed the kynges doughter
our princeesse vnto the Dolphine agayne
ne, or as the voyce went among many, vnto
the seconde Brother, and he shulde haue
bene prince in Englonde and king in tyme
to come, so that he sought alwayes to plucke
he vs from the Emperour and to ioyne vs
vnto fraunce, to make fraunce stronge
enough to matche the Emperour / and to be

The practise

se him downe, that the pop empyght reyg^s
the marte ne a **GOD** alone, and do what pleased
shuld haue him, without countrollynge of anye ouer-
bene at Ca seer. And for the same purpose, he left no
lice, thing vnprouided to bypasse the marte frō
Andwerpe to Calcs.

This be sufficient at this tyme, though
I coulde saye moze, and though other haue
deserued that I moze sayd: ye and I coulde
moze depely haue etred into the practise of
our cardinall, but I spare for diuerse consy-
deracions, and namely for hys sake / whiche
neuer spared me / nor any faythfull frende
of his owne, nor anye that tolde hym truth,
nor spareth to persecute the bloud of Christ
in as cleare lyght as euer was, and vnder as
subtyll colour of pprocrisly as euer was any
persecution syns the creation of the world.
Neyther haue I sayde for hate of any par-
son or parsons (God I take to recozd) but
of theyz wickednesse only, and to calle them
to repentaunce / knowledginge that I am a
synner also, & that a greuous. Now be it,
is a deuelysh thyng and a mercyleffe to de-
fend wickednes against the open truth, and
not to haue power to repent. And therfore
I doubt not, if men wyl not be warned he
rehy

of pꝛates.

reby, but that God wyll utter moze pꝛactise
by whome he wyll, & not cease, vntyll he ha
ue broken the bande of the wylye hypocry
tes, which persecute so subtylly.

And fynally, let them remembze that I,
to pꝛeuent all occasyons and all carnall bea
stes that seke fleshy lybertie, sent forth the
true obedience of a Chꝛyste man w̄ yet they
condempned, but after they had condēpned
the newe testament, as ryght was, whence
the obediēce had hys aucthoꝛytie. Now the
if whē the lyght is come abroad in w̄ they
wyckednesse can not be hꝝd, they fynde no
such obedience in the people vnto theyꝝ old
tyzanny, whose faute is it. This is a sure
conclusyon: none obedience is not of loue
can longe endure: and in your dedes can no
man see any cause of loue: and the knowledge
of Chꝛyst, for whose sake onely a mā wold
loue you, though ye were neuer so euell, yea
persecute. Now then if any disobedience ry
se, are ye not the cause therof youre selues?

Saye not but that ye be warned.